

'I always want to have a go'

Kym Marsh on Hear'Say, Corrie and Take That the musical

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→ *Sport*



The Guardian

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Newspaper of the year

PM accused of being 'out of touch' over cost of living

Rowena Mason *Tokyo*
Pippa Crerar

Rishi Sunak has been accused of being out of touch with ordinary families after claiming the economy was looking up and people's household incomes were "hugely outperforming" expectations despite the cost of living crisis.

On the plane to Japan for the G7 summit of world leaders, the prime minister said that even though consumers were struggling with high inflation and the cost of food and energy, there were "lots of signs that things are moving in the right direction" with the economy.

Sunak also risked an internal row with his home secretary, Suella Braverman, by defending record numbers of people coming to the UK legally and refusing to commit to the 2019 manifesto pledge to reduce net immigration. The chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, also waded into the Conservative dispute, saying that the government would maintain a "pragmatic" approach to immigration despite official data published next week expected to show the numbers have increased by more than 700,000.

Sunak also insisted that Brexit was working by citing cheaper beer and sanitary products. It came as three big global carmakers called on the UK government to renegotiate the deal, saying rules on sourcing parts threatened the future of the British automotive industry.

However, it was the prime minister's upbeat assessment of the economy, when so many households expected to feel the pinch and for some time, which prompted criticism. Labour's Treasury spokesman, James Murray, said: "Almost every word that comes out of the prime minister's mouth shows how utterly out of 11 →



◀ *The Duke and Duchess of Sussex at an awards ceremony on Tuesday*
PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES/ MS. FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN

Harry and Meghan in 'near catastrophic car chase' with paparazzi

Caroline Davies
Victoria Bekiempis *New York*

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex and the duchess's mother were involved in a "near catastrophic" two-hour car chase in New York after being followed by "a ring of highly aggressive paparazzi", the duke's spokesperson said yesterday.

The incident is said to have happened after Prince Harry, Meghan and Doria Ragland attended an awards ceremony on Tuesday.

The three of them are said to have been subjected to a "relentless pursuit" involving half a dozen blacked-out vehicles.

There were no reported collisions, injuries or arrests, police said.

In a statement, their spokesperson said: "Last night, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and Ms Ragland were involved in a near catastrophic car chase at the hands of a ring of highly aggressive paparazzi.

"This relentless pursuit, lasting over two hours, resulted in multiple near collisions involving other drivers on the road, pedestrians and two NYPD [New York police] officers.

"While being a public figure comes with a level of interest from the public, it should never come at the cost of anyone's safety.

"Dissemination of these images, given the ways in which they were obtained, encourages a highly intrusive practice that is dangerous to all in involved."

According to reports, the couple originally left the awards ceremony in an SUV and were followed by photographers. Aided by police officers assisting their private security detail, the couple went to a police station about 14 blocks away, the Associated Press news agency reported.

They spent several minutes there waiting for the 6 →

Water firms' £10bn plan to reduce sewage spills

Alex Lawson

Water companies have today apologised for repeated sewage spills and pledged to invest £10bn this decade in an attempt to quell public anger over pollution in seas and rivers.

Companies in England will triple their existing investment plans to plough funds into the biggest modernisation of sewers "since the Victorian era" to reduce sewage spills.

The industry body, Water UK, said the plans would cut the number of overflow incidents by up to 140,000 each year by 2030, 2 →

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'The public is right to be upset about the current state of our rivers and beaches'

Ruth Kelly
Chair of Water UK

The Thames at Marlow: England averaged 824 spills a day in 2022
PHOTOGRAPH: GEOFFREY SWAINE/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Water companies pledge to spend £10bn tackling spills of sewage into rivers and sea

Continued *from page 1*

compared with 2020. Environment Agency figures earlier this year revealed a total of 301,091 sewage spills in 2022, an average of 824 a day.

The pledged spending on more than 350,000 miles of sewers comes on top of the current £3.1bn being spent between 2020 and 2025.

Shareholders in water companies will initially fund the investments, but the costs will eventually be recouped through unspecified increases in customers' bills - determined by regulators - in a move which threatens to put further pressure on households.

The investment will bring new facilities to hold surges in rainwater, increased capacity for sewage treatment works, measures to reduce rainfall entering sewers and the repair of misconnected pipes.

An online hub, to be launched next year, will give the public almost live information on overflows and the state of rivers and coastal waters. The firms have also pledged to support up to 100 communities in creating new protected water for swimming.

The move comes after intense criticism of water companies from politicians and campaigners.

Water UK, which represents 25 companies across the country, issued an apology and said the public was "right to be upset about the current quality of our rivers and beaches".

There have been calls for greater fines for breaches of environmental laws and the Environment Agency has even suggested that water company bosses should be jailed for serious pollution.

Ruth Kelly, the chair of Water UK, said: "The message from the water and sewage industry today is clear: we are sorry. More should have been done to address the issue of spillages sooner and the public is right to be upset about the current quality of our rivers and beaches.

"We have listened and have an unprecedented plan to start to put it right. This problem cannot be fixed overnight, but we are determined to do everything we can to transform our rivers and seas in the way we all want to see."

Britain's privatised water and sewage companies paid £1.4bn in dividends in 2022, up from £540m the previous year. Annual bonuses paid to water company executives rose by 20% in 2021, as water bosses paid themselves £24.8m, including £14.7m in bonuses, benefits and incentives, in 2021-22.

Last week, the chief executives of Yorkshire Water and Thames Water and the owner of South West Water declined their bonuses in an acknowledgment of the public anger over sewage spills.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Ed Davey, said: "This apology and plan just don't go far enough. For years water companies have arrogantly dismissed the public's fears of rivers, lakes and coastlines being damaged by sewage discharges.

"This announcement does nothing to match the billions water firms have paid out in dividends to overseas investors, or to stop their CEOs being handed multimillion-pound bonuses."

Davey also called on Thérèse Coffey, the environment secretary, to apologise.

In a letter apologising to its customers, Yorkshire Water said it was investing £180m in reducing discharges from storm overflows over the next two years.

Its chief executive, Nicola Shaw, said: "Tackling overflows, which were designed into the system as a relief valve, is a priority for us, but it is also a significant task … further investment from our shareholders is helping us tackle this issue."

Last month, Coffey said the government would introduce legislation to put plans to reduce storm overflows on a "new legal footing".

Stuart Singleton-White, head of campaigns at the Angling Trust, said: "This must be only the beginning. The problems our rivers face will not be solved by sorting out overflow spills, chucking in some money for swimming and putting nature-based solutions on the end of pipes."

A spokesperson for Ofwat, the water regulator, said: "We welcome the apology from water companies and this now needs to be turned into action. We have been pushing water companies to do more, faster, for their customers and for our waterways and beaches.

"We look forward to seeing the plans and how companies will step up performance."

140,000
Target number of sewage overflow incidents to be cut annually until 2030, with pledged £10bn spending

20%
Increase in annual bonuses paid in 2021 to the bosses of Britain's privatised water and sewage firms

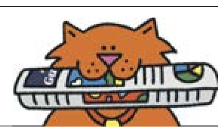
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Paul Lewis
Investigations editor



Last month we published a series of articles that sought to lift the entrenched secrecy shrouding the royal family. Like most of our investigations, the cost of the crown series was difficult, painstaking work. In the run-up to the coronation of King Charles, there had been little debate about the institution of the monarch, let alone the money and power it has accrued over the centuries. But we believe that when a head of state is unelected, it is all the more important that journalists hold them to account. This is what you get from the Guardian: persistent investigative work about issues that matter. If you appreciate this approach, if you enjoy this newspaper, one of the best ways to support our rigorous, independent, open, trustworthy journalism for the longer term is to take out a subscription to the Guardian and Observer. Your support will galvanise our mission to keep the powerful honest - and the honest powerful.

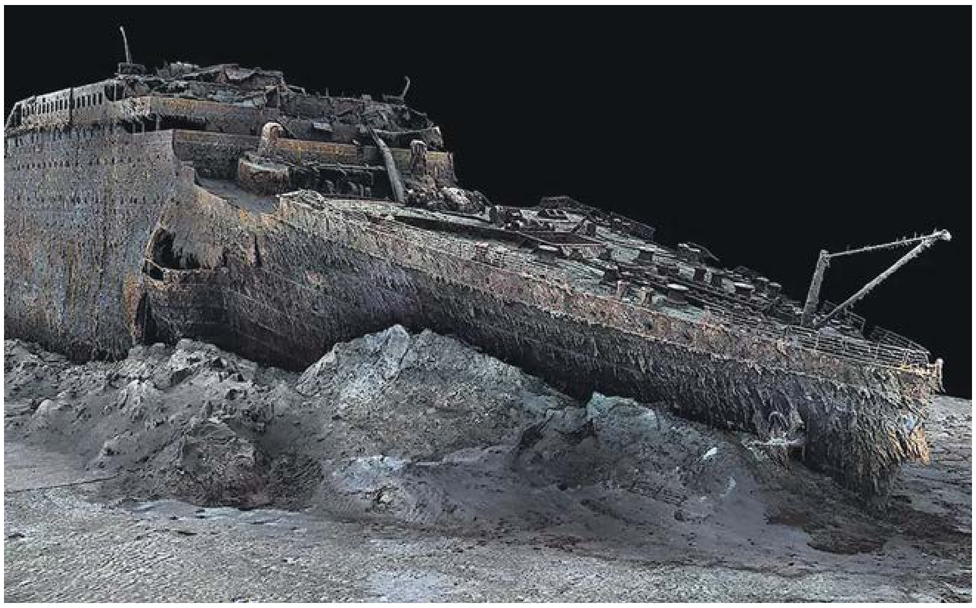
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‘She has stories to tell’ – lifesize digital scan of Titanic could reveal tragedy’s hidden secrets

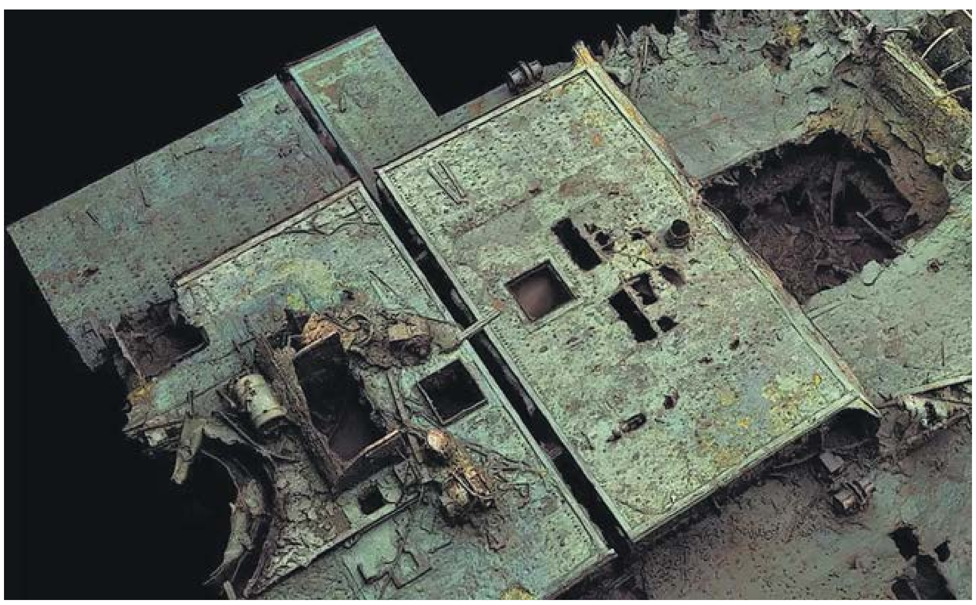




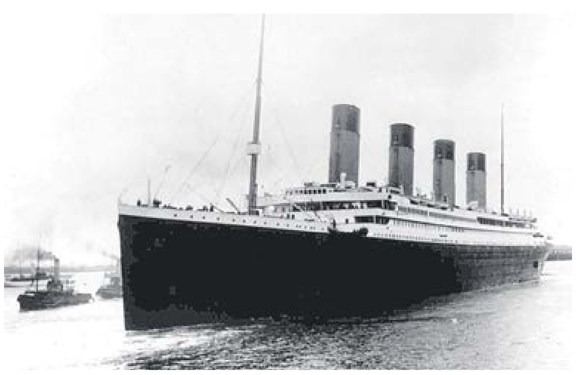
▲ The bow of the ship and its anchor can be seen clearly in images that show the wreck as if the sea had been drained away

◀ Iron-eating microbes are gradually destroying the wreck

PHOTOGRAPHS: ATLANTIC PRODUCTIONS/ MAGELLAN



▶ The scans took six weeks to collect last year



▼ The Titanic departing Southampton in April 1912

Hannah Devlin
Science Correspondent

The Titanic has been depicted in unprecedented detail in the first full-sized digital scan of the sunken liner.

The unique 3D view of the entire vessel, which can be seen as if the sea had been drained away, could reveal fresh clues about how it came to sink on its maiden voyage in 1912.

The scan also preserves a “digital twin” of the ship, which is rapidly being destroyed by iron-eating bacteria, salt corrosion and deep ocean currents.

Parks Stephenson, an American Titanic expert, told BBC Radio 4’s Today programme yesterday that the images could provide new forensic evidence that could prompt a reappraisal of how the sinking unfolded.

“I’ve seen enough in my years of studying the Titanic that I am suspicious of the narrative that we’ve become accustomed to over the past century,” Stephenson said.

He questions whether the Titanic hit the iceberg along its starboard side, as widely assumed.

“I’m seeing a growing amount of evidence in recent years that suggests Titanic actually grounded, ran over a submerged shelf of the iceberg – which was the first scenario proposed back in April 1912,” he said.

“There is still much to learn from the wreck, which is essentially the last surviving eyewitness to the disaster. She has stories to tell.”

The scan was carried out in summer 2022 by Magellan, a British deep-sea mapping company, and London-based Atlantic Productions, which is making a documentary about the project.

The Titanic was long assumed to have sunk in one piece, but when the wreck was discovered in 1985 it was found to have broken up before reaching the ocean floor. It lies in two main pieces about 600 metres apart, surrounded by a field of debris.

The wreck has been explored and imaged on many occasions. However, conventional cameras provide only clips or snapshots of the ship rather than recording the entire object. And time is running out to capture the wreck in detail.

The lack of light and the intense pressure at a depth of nearly 2.5 miles means there is little sea life in the vicinity. But iron-eating microbes have colonised the vessel and are gradually transforming the 50,000 tonnes of iron into rusticles. These eventually dissolve into a fine powder and are carried away on ocean currents.

Scans of the wreck were carried out over a six-week expedition last summer. A specialist ship was positioned in the north Atlantic, 435 miles off the coast of Canada. The expedition deployed two submersibles – named Romeo and Juliet – which spent more than 200 hours close to the seabed mapping every millimetre of the wreck and the three-mile debris field in detail.

The submersibles took more than 700,000 images from every angle, creating an exact 3D reconstruction.

The images show the eerily recognisable form of the vessel, covered in stalactites of rust. Strewn across the debris field are an array of objects including unopened champagne bottles, statues and dozens of shoes.

The expedition also included a flower-laying ceremony in memory of those who lost their lives in the maritime disaster.

More than 1,500 people died when the ship, which was carrying 2,224 passengers and crew, sank. That number included Captain Edward Smith, who went down with the ship. The ship was the largest afloat at the time and was billed as unsinkable.

Man in black and white: Cash’s lyrics to be collated in new book

Sarah Shaffi

An assortment of the lyrics of Johnny Cash are to be collected for the first time in a new book due to be published in November.

Johnny Cash: The Life in Lyrics, by Cash with Mark Stielper, will include rare and never-before-seen visual material alongside stories and commentary from Cash’s son, John Carter Cash, and Stielper, the Cash and Carter family historian, as well as others. Visual contributions to the book are being overseen by the public historian Dr Brian Dempsey.

Country music artist Cash, who died in 2003, composed more than 600 songs in his lifetime, including hits such as Don’t Take Your Guns to Town and I Walk the Line. During his 45-year career, Cash made more than 70 albums and won 11 Grammy awards.

This book marks the first time the Cash estate has opened up its archive to share stories about the creation of Cash’s music with his fans. John Carter Cash said there was “no better way to know my father than to look at his written works”.

“Whether the songs he recorded, his poetry, or material not published in his lifetime, he put his heart, blood and spirit into everything,” he added. “I am blessed to see this book being released, and to know that his brilliance and life are being honoured through focus on his greatest life creation – his words.”

Lee Brackstone, the publisher, described the book as a “portrait through lyrics, contextualising commentary, rare photography and ephemera of a man whose outlaw spirit is now deeply and irresistibly entangled with the whole concept of Americana”.



▲ Country star Johnny Cash wrote more than 600 songs in his lifetime

Cash sold more than 90m records worldwide and was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, and the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Johnny Cash: The Life in Lyrics by Cash with Mark Stielper is set to come out on 23 November, published by White Rabbit in the UK. There will be 750 deluxe editions of the book available, costing £95 each, containing exclusive archive material. There will also be a regular hardback edition, ebook and audiobook.

World is likely to breach key 1.5C climate threshold by 2027, scientists warn

Fiona Harvey
Environment editor

The world is almost certain to experience new record temperatures in the next five years, and temperatures are likely to rise by more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, scientists have warned.

The breaching of the crucial 1.5C threshold, which scientists have warned could have dire consequences, should be only temporary, according to research from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

However, it would represent a marked acceleration of human impact on the global climate system, and send the world into "uncharted territory", the UN agency warned.

Under the 2015 Paris climate agreement, countries have pledged to try to hold global temperatures to no higher than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, after scientific advice that heating beyond that level would unleash a cascade of increasingly catastrophic and potentially irreversible impacts.

Prof Petteri Taalas, the secretary general of the WMO, said: "This report does not mean we will permanently exceed the 1.5C specified in the Paris agreement, which refers to long-term warming over many years. However, WMO is sounding the alarm that we will breach the 1.5C level on a temporary basis with increasing frequency."

Global average surface temperatures have never before breached the 1.5C threshold. The highest average in previous years was 1.28C above pre-industrial levels.

The report, published yesterday, found there was a 66% likelihood of exceeding the 1.5C threshold in at least one year between 2023 and 2027.

New record temperatures have been set in many areas around the world in the heatwaves of the past year, but those highs may only be the beginning, according to the report, as climate breakdown and the impact of a developing El Niño weather system combine to create heatwaves around the globe.

El Niño is part of an oscillating weather system that develops in the Pacific. For the past three years, the world has been in the opposing phase, known as La Niña, which has had a dampening effect on temperature increases around the world.

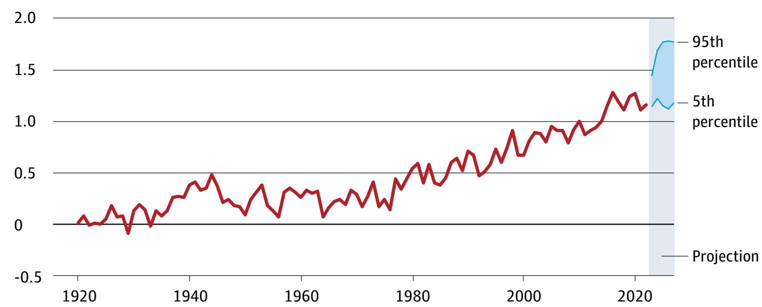
As La Niña ends and a new El Niño develops, there is a 98% likelihood that at least one of the next five years will be the hottest on record, the scientists found.

Warning of the effects, Taalas said: "A warming El Niño is expected to develop in the coming months and this will combine with human-induced climate change to push global temperatures into uncharted territory. This will have far-reaching repercussions for health, food security, water management and the environment." He added: "We need to be prepared."

The Arctic is heating much faster than the rest of the world, and this appears to be having an impact on global weather systems, including the jet stream, which has disrupted weather across the northern hemisphere in recent years.

There is likely to be less rainfall this year in the Amazon, Central America, Australia and Indonesia, the report found. This is particularly bad news for the Amazon, where scientists have grown increasingly concerned that a vicious cycle of heating and deforestation could tip the region from rainforest into savannah-like conditions.

Global temperatures are likely to exceed 1.5C above pre-industrial levels for at least one of the next five years
Global mean near-surface temperature anomalies from 1850-1900 average, C



Source: WMO analysis of HadCRUT5, NOAA, GISTEMP, ERA5, JRA-55, Berkeley Earth temperature data

That could have calamitous consequences for the planet, which relies on rainforests as massive carbon sinks.

Over the next five years, there is likely to be above-average rainfall in northern Europe, Alaska and northern Siberia, and the Sahel region across northern Africa, according to the report.

For each year from 2023 to 2027, the global near-surface temperature is predicted to be between 1.1C and 1.8C above the pre-industrial average, taken from the years 1850 to 1900.

The world has warmed considerably in recent years. In 2015, when the Paris agreement was signed, requiring countries to hold global temperature increases to no more than 2C above pre-industrial levels while "pursuing efforts" to hold them to 1.5C, it was forecast that the chance of temporarily exceeding the 1.5C threshold within the following five years was zero.

This November, governments will meet for the Cop28 UN climate summit, where they will assess progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris agreement.

Known as the "global stocktake", this assessment is likely to show that the world is far off track to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the 43% this decade that is required to have a good chance of limiting temperature rises to 1.5C.



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Salisbury's falcons get set to go out on a wing
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National

Labour ready to oust Birmingham council leader over report of 'dysfunctional' group

Jessica Murray
Midlands correspondent

The national Labour party has announced it will appoint the next leader of the city council in Birmingham, taking the decision away from councillors, after a damning internal report said the local party was "dysfunctional" and dominated by "personality-driven factionalism".

The move would in effect oust the current leader, Ian Ward, who was re-elected as leader of the UK's largest local authority after a contest in May last year, and his deputy, Brigid Jones.

Labour's national party asked its campaign improvement board to look into Birmingham late last year and the subsequent report, seen by the Guardian, details a litany of failings.

It found there were reports of misogyny and racism in the party, women and black and minority ethnic councillors were "disengaged and disempowered" and relationships with trade unions were defined by "animosity and lack of trust".

"It is clear the existing culture and processes have contributed to a dysfunctional climate," it said.

"A legacy of years of personality-driven factionalism, cultural challenges, two particularly bitter industrial disputes, a recent divisive leadership contest and changes to governance have had a detrimental impact on the mood and morale of the Labour group."

A key recommendation is that Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) and other party members from outside the region interview and appoint a new leader, deputy leader and group officers, who should now be elected annually.

This arrangement would remain in place "until the NEC are satisfied the Birmingham Labour group can effectively run its AGM", the report said.

> *'The existing culture and processes have contributed to a dysfunctional climate ... a legacy of years of personality-driven factionalism'*
>
> **Labour report into Birmingham council**

The announcement was met with anger by some local councillors, who told BirminghamLive it was "disgraceful behaviour from higher powers" in the party.

The Labour MP for Birmingham Selly Oak, Steve McCabe, criticised the report as a "hatchet job". "Keir Starmer should halt it now. It's a putsch mounted by people almost entirely dependent on his patronage. Birmingham is the loser," he said.

Robert Alden, the leader of Birmingham Conservatives, said the report's findings were of "no surprise" but the party's response "was overly centralised and antidemocratic decision-making that ignores the wishes of local areas".

Responding to the report, Ward insisted he still had the confidence of the local party and said by reverting to annual leadership elections "the group risks turning inwards instead of facing the city's challenges".

"I have led Labour to two overwhelming election victories. I retain the confidence of the Birmingham Labour group having recently won a leadership election and I hope to continue leading our group as we tackle the challenges our city faces," he said.

The report also said a large number of complaints about services such as housing repairs and waste collection suggested the council had "longstanding and persistent issues in getting the basics right" and concluded it was the "single biggest risk to the party's reputation" in the city.

The Labour report said Birmingham was "strategically significant" for the party, and a key area of concern before the West Midlands mayoral election next year and city-wide elections in 2026.

Labour won 65 of the 101 council seats in the last local elections in May 2022, but with a significantly reduced vote share that has prompted "widespread fear" the party could lose seats in 2026, the report said.

A key driver for the report was a survey of minority ethnic councillors last year, revealed by the Guardian, in which they reported a "toxic culture" designed to keep them "in their place, which is at the bottom".

A Labour party spokesperson said: "Labour will look at the recommendations in full and, where change is needed from the Labour party, we will implement that change."



PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES FOR PARKWOOD

▲ *Beyoncé on stage in Stockholm, Sweden, as part of her world tour. Her gig last night was in Cardiff*

Alarm over facial recognition policing during Beyoncé gig

Geneva Abdul

Police were due to use live facial recognition technology in Cardiff during the Beyoncé concert last night despite concerns about racial bias and human rights.

The LFR technology was to be used in Cardiff city centre, but not at the Principality stadium, to "support" the artist's concert by identifying wanted individuals and ensuring public safeguarding, South Wales police said, as the artist kicked off the UK leg of her first solo headline tour in seven years.

In the past, police use of LFR in England and Wales had been limited to special operations such as football matches or the coronation, when there was a crackdown on protesters.

Daragh Murray, a senior lecturer in law at Queen Mary University in London, said the normalisation of invasive surveillance capability at events such as a concert was concerning, and was taking place without any real public debate.

"I find it very hard to believe that it could be useful at a concert, or at a rugby match," said Murray, who has studied the Metropolitan police's use of LFR. "But given the really significant interference with human rights, I think it's up to the police to provide a really compelling argument as to why it's necessary." In a typical LFR deployment, police use cameras to scan passersby to match biometrics against those held on a watchlist.

South Wales police last used the technology for the FIM speedway grand prix in Cardiff in August 2022. Of the 20,929 people scanned against a watchlist of 245 images, there were no alerts, actions or arrests, according to the force.

Murray said the technology had dangerous effects on modifying behaviour and, in turn, democratic processes such as protests or political opposition.

"I think things like live facial recognition are the first step, but I think they're opening the doors to the use of permanent facial recognition across city-wide surveillance camera networks," he said.







Prince Harry and Meghan in 'car chase with aggressive paparazzi'

◀ *The Duchess of Sussex at the ceremony (left) with Prince Harry and her mother, Doria Ragland. Top right, Harry's mother, Diana, who died in a crash in 1997 while being chased by paparazzi; above, Meghan with Gloria Steinem and Teresa Younger* PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY/PA

Continued *from page 1*

situation to de-escalate and, once it was safe, left in a yellow taxicab, according to a law enforcement official, who was speaking on condition of anonymity. However, after driving around the block for 10 minutes it was evident they were still being followed. They returned to the police precinct and left the taxi. Eventually they completed their journey in their security vehicle.

A member of the security team protecting the duke and duchess said that after the couple had left the event the chase was "chaotic" and could have ended in deaths. Speaking to CNN, Chris Sanchez said there were "about a dozen vehicles - cars, scooters and bicycles". "The public were in jeopardy at several points. It could have been fatal," he said.

He added that at one point the couple's limousine was blocked by the vehicles, which were "jumping kerbs and red lights". When the couple got to the apartment they were staying in, he described them as "scared, exhausted, but relieved to be back".

Sukhcharn Singh told Associated Press he was driving his yellow cab on 57th Street when a security guard waved him down. Singh pulled to the kerb and in came Harry, Meghan and her mother. "They were following us the whole time," said Singh, though he said he would not call it a chase.



▲ *The royal couple in Manchester last year* PHOTOGRAPH: OLI SCARFF/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Julian Phillips, the NYPD deputy commissioner for public information, said: "On Tuesday evening, May 16, the NYPD assisted the private security team protecting the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. There were numerous photographers that made their transport challenging. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex arrived at their destination and there were no reported collisions, summonses, injuries or arrests in regard."

The duke and duchess are said to accept there is a heightened level of attention when they are at public events. In this case, they entered and left the venue publicly and were photographed by paparazzi, according to a source.

> *'The public were in jeopardy at several points. It could have been fatal'*
>
> **Chris Sanchez**
> *Security team*

But there were understood to be fears that the ensuing chase could have been fatal. According to one source, the chase involved half a dozen blacked-out vehicles with unidentified people driving recklessly and dangerously.

Traffic violations were said to have included driving on the sidewalk, running red lights, reversing down a one-way street, driving while on the phone, driving while photographing, and illegally blocking a moving vehicle. It was claimed that individuals involved were confronted by uniformed police multiple times and sped off to continue the pursuit.

The family were staying at a private residence and did not want to compromise the security of their friend's home, a source said. There is said to be footage taken from security along with other evidence to support the timeline and circumstances.

Meghan received a Woman of Vision award as she and Harry made their first public appearance since the coronation of King Charles. In her speech, Meghan encouraged women to fight for equality as she accepted the award at the Ms. Foundation for Women's annual gala.

The New York City mayor, Eric Adams, told reporters he had not received a full briefing about the incident yet, but he called it "reckless and irresponsible" for anyone to be chasing people in vehicles in the densely populated city, and said: "Two of our officers could have been injured."

Buckingham Palace declined to comment on the reports.

Video footage obtained by the TMZ website appeared to show the Sussexes in a taxi, which was stationary with flashes apparently from cameras reflecting off the vehicle's windows. Two police cars were behind them, but when the taxi drove off the police went in a different direction. "It looks like the cops tried to outwit the paps," TMZ said.

Harry has frequently spoken about his anger about press intrusion, which he blames for the death of his mother, Diana, Princess of Wales, who was killed when her car crashed as it was followed by paparazzi in Paris in 1997. He has also spoken of his fears of history repeating itself.

He is involved in numerous court cases in London, in which he has accused papers of using unlawful methods to target him and his family.

He is bringing a contested claim against Mirror Group Newspapers over allegations of unlawful information gathering. Harry is also waiting for rulings over whether similar cases against publishers Associated Newspapers Ltd and News Group Newspapers can continue.

A judgment is also expected over the duke's libel claim against Associated - the publisher of the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday - over an article on his case against the Home Office.

The Sussexes Different attitudes in US and UK over battle for privacy

Edward Helmore
New York

The latest tangle between Prince Harry, his wife, Meghan, and a gaggle of paparazzi photographers on the streets of New York has highlighted their ongoing struggles with celebrity in the US.

Their journey towards a new - and potentially lucrative - life in America has had a mixed reception in the country's media, where they are seen as just one famous couple in a country with an already large celebrity quotient.

But in the UK the ongoing intense tabloid interest has fuelled a market for exclusive pictures of the pair - whether in their new home state of California or at the type of high-profile event they were attending in Manhattan.

That means where the Sussexes go, the paparazzi follow. "If you get an exclusive of a candid moment you could get tens of thousands of dollars," says a source in the photography industry.

The existence of widely different public perceptions of Harry and Meghan on each side of the Atlantic highlights the friction between their desire to both demand privacy and seek attention with TV interviews and award appearances.

Earlier this year, the couple were skewered in an episode of South Park that portrayed them as both publicity seeking and publicity avoidant. The Worldwide Privacy Tour episode even prompted reports that Harry and Meghan might sue the show's creators.

A spokesperson for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex later said the rumours of potential action were "all frankly nonsense."

Still, the question of media intrusion into the couple's lives in the US has come up before. In July 2020, they sued for invasion of privacy over illegal images they say were taken of their son, Archie, in their garden in Montecito, California.

According to the suit, the Daily Mail published the address of their home and paparazzi flew drones and helicopters over their home hoping to get a picture.

"Some paparazzi and media outlets have flown drones a mere 20 feet above the house, as often as three times a day, to obtain photographs of the couple and their young son in their private residence," the complaint said.

Yesterday, New York Police rejected claims that the couple had been in a "near catastrophic" car chase with photographers.

"There were numerous photographers that made their transport challenging," an NYPD spokesperson said. "The Duke and Duchess of Sussex arrived at their destination and there were no reported collisions, summonses, injuries, or arrests in regard."

A spokesperson for Getty Images said that no Getty-affiliated photographers were part of or involved in the incident. "All images on the Getty Images website were taken at the Women of Vision awards at Ziegfeld Ballroom and before the alleged car chase took place," they added.

A photographer familiar with the market for celebrity pictures in New York, but who had not covered the Ms Foundation event that they were attending, suggested the claims could be designed to play into the Lady Diana narrative, given how popular the former Princess of Wales was in the US.

"Americans are a bit more sympathetic to the couple than the Brits right now," they said.

The market for Harry and Meghan pictures is readily apparent. In March, Meghan was filmed as she left a Mexican restaurant in West Hollywood. The images were credited to paparazzi agencies Mega and Backgrid and published by the Daily Mail and People.

A spokesperson for Mega declined to comment on Tuesday's incident.

But there are jokes, too, that photographers are tipped off by the couple themselves. Meghan was photographed going hiking with friends in California on the day of her father-in-law's coronation, which led to some sniping in the US media.

"'Oh you, oh hello … where did you come from? How on Earth did you know I'd be here?'" snarked former TV anchor Megyn Kelly, a critic of the couple. "It was obvious, like everything with this woman."



▲ South Park's Worldwide Privacy Tour episode mocked the Sussexes





▲ 'Sensitive' police reports about the footballer Wayne Rooney, above, and the voicemails of the actor Denise Welch were allegedly obtained for stories

Mirror trial Newspaper given police reports on footballers, court told

Jim Waterson
Media editor

The Sunday Mirror illegally bought police reports on Steven Gerrard and Wayne Rooney that detailed how the footballers were targeted by crime gangs, the high court has heard.

Graham Johnson, a former reporter on the newspaper, told the phone-hacking trial that he would often commission private investigators to illegally "blag" the records of Premier League footballers.

He said in a statement that he had bought "sensitive" police intelligence reports on Gerrard and Rooney in the mid-2000s, "mainly in connection with their links to organised crime and stories in connection to them having sex with various women which then became linked to criminal gangs as blackmail plots and professional 'honey traps' and so on".

He was giving evidence on behalf of Prince Harry and more than 100 other alleged phone-hacking victims who say they were illegally targeted by journalists working for the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror and People. Mirror Group Newspapers is disputing much of the evidence and argues that Harry and the others have waited too long to bring their cases.

Johnson said he had hacked the voicemails of the actor Denise Welch in an attempt to prove a story that she was in a relationship with a criminal underworld figure. He was ordered by the top editors at the Sunday Mirror to bug Welch's hotel room to catch her in the alleged relationship.

The Sunday Mirror hacked the voicemails of footballers and football managers including Cristiano Ronaldo, Rio Ferdinand and Avram Grant.

Hugh Grant's emails were hacked and used with the knowledge of the acting Sunday Mirror editor Richard Wallace, who is now the boss of Rupert Murdoch's TalkTV.

Mirror journalists bought access to celebrities' flight details through a contact at the British Airways VIP lounge at Heathrow.

Johnson admitted he had had a lengthy career "destroying lives" while working at the News of the World and Sunday Mirror and regularly made up stories.

The court heard that while he was at the News of the World he had fabricated a 1,500-word story about the "Beast of Bodmin Moor", in which he claimed to have found a giant animal on the loose. In reality, Johnson took long-lens photos of a puma at ExmoorZoo and got a photographer to scrape "claw marks" into a tree.

Johnson said he had "decided to start telling the truth" after reading a philosophy book by Alain de Botton. When Tina Weaver, his former editor, was arrested on suspicion of hacking in 2013, he walked into a police station and confessed to one instance of phone hacking. No charges were brought against Weaver.

Andrew Green KC, the barrister for Mirror Group Newspapers, accused Johnson of being a hypocrite as he had admitted wiring up microphones at a London mansion to record an "orgy of the ruling elite". Johnson argued this was legitimate because it had been carried out with the agreement of the orgy organisers, who were paid £25,000 for their assistance.

Green suggested Johnson was a "self-confessed professional liar bent on self-preservation" who stood to benefit financially from phone-hacking legal cases. The lawyer said Johnson had worked closely with the press reform campaign group Hacked Off as well as the legal teams bringing cases against newspapers.

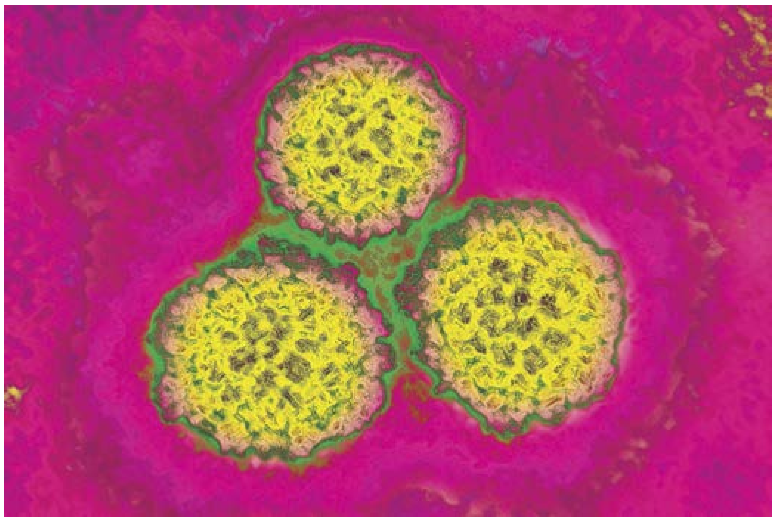
Johnson said his only interest was in helping "the victims of the organised crime at Mirror Group". He said his main source of employment was as a freelance journalist investigating tabloid tactics for his website Byline Investigates.

Earlier in the day, the court heard retired police officer Derek Haslam say he went undercover in an attempt to find out who murdered private investigator Daniel Morgan and had heard the investigator Jonathan Rees brag about his work for newspapers including the Daily Mirror. Rees allegedly boasted that he could "get the queen's medical records".

The trial continues.

Microwaves could offer breakthrough in treating HPV cancers

Linda Geddes



▲ *Human papillomavirus causes nearly all cervical cancers* PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY

A medical device that uses microwaves to destroy verrucas could provide a less invasive way of treating pre-cancers and cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), as well as genital warts.

Almost all cervical cancers, and most cancers of the vagina, vulva, penis and anus, are caused by HPV. Certain strains of the virus cause genital warts, which affect 3-4% of British adults.

Currently, most of these cancers or pre-cancers are treated by cutting or burning away the affected cells and some surrounding tissue, which is effective but can be uncomfortable and cause bleeding or inflammation. Treating the cervix also increases the risk of premature birth if the woman subsequently becomes pregnant.

Genital warts are usually frozen off but sometimes require multiple treatments and may return.

Prof Sheila Graham, of the MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research, and colleagues turned to a machine called Swift that is already used in clinics to treat stubborn warts and verrucas. It uses a small probe to deliver microwave energy to underlying cells, heating them up from the inside to about 45-48C. Unlike existing cancer and pre-cancer treatments, which also remove healthy tissue, only those cells directly below the probe are affected.

In a recent study, microwaves were used to treat stubborn verrucas - which are also caused by certain strains of HPV - resulting in a 76% clearance rate, compared with 33% when they were frozen off with liquid nitrogen. Data suggests that the treatment rallied immune cells to the site, helping to clear any remaining virus.

To investigate its potential as a cancer treatment, Graham's team tested the device on chunks of pre-cancerous or cancerous cervical tissue that had been grown outside the body.

"We found that the treatment is very precise, only inducing temperature changes in the tissue at the site of delivery," Graham said. "This temperature change induces something called a heat shock response, which shuts down the process of making proteins, including the viral proteins that cause cancer."

It also triggered the production of a molecule called p53 that causes cancerous or precancerous cells to self-destruct. The study was published in Lancet eBioMedicine.

Graham said: "We are thrilled that our results demonstrate that this treatment could be a novel therapy for HPV-associated diseases. Current treatments can cause sustained bleeding or inflammation and diseased tissue can be missed, whereas heat treatment through microwaving could provide better tissue coverage, and be more acceptable and better tolerated by patients."

Dr Anita Mitra, a gynaecologist and obstetrician and an ambassador of the Eve Appeal cancer charity, said: "Individuals with these conditions often need to undergo multiple operations to remove the disease, which is often recurrent and can be quite disfiguring, and result in problems with controlling the passage of stool or urine. This technique offers the potential for a greater precision of treatment with less damage to surrounding healthy tissue."

Childhood virus could be key to MS, say experts

Hannah Devlin

Scientists have uncovered how a common childhood virus could trigger multiple sclerosis, in findings that could pave the way for new treatments for the devastating condition.

The research suggests that the body's immune response to the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), a normally harmless infection, can misfire and mistakenly target a crucial protein in the brain and spinal cord.

"MS is an incredibly complex disease, but our study provides an important piece in the puzzle and could explain why some people develop the disease," said Dr Olivia Thomas, of the Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

More than 90% of people are infected with EBV and most experience only mild cold symptoms.

After infection, the virus sits dormant, kept suppressed by antibodies. In some people, the latest work suggests, it is these antibodies that could be causing MS.



Klein wears Wolf's clothing to explore conspiracy theories

Sarah Shaffi

The author and Guardian columnist Naomi Klein is to publish a book about conspiracy theories, which she says is "more personal, more experimental" than her previous books.

Doppelganger uses the fact Klein has often been mistaken for the author Naomi Wolf to explore conspiracy theories and the "Mirror World", our destabilised present rife with doubles and confusion.

Combining "tragicomic memoir, chilling political reportage and piercing cultural analysis", Klein's book will look at how "far-right movements feign solidarity with the working class; AI-generated content blurs the line between genuine and spurious, and new-age wellness entrepreneurs-turned anti-vaxxers further scramble our familiar political allegiances".

Klein's book discusses the author's "doppelganger", Wolf, whose name and public persona "are sufficiently similar that many people have confused the two over the years" even though her views are "antithetical to Klein's own", said Penguin Press, the book's UK publisher.

Wolf has been involved in a series of controversies. Her most recent book, Outrages, was pulled and pulped in the US after she misread a historical term. The book examined the effect of 19th-century legal changes on the lives of Victorian poets and argued that the Obscene Publications Act of 1857 had marked a turning point in the treatment of gay people. Wolf argued that it had led to a number of executions of gay men.

But in an interview with Wolf, the writer and broadcaster Matthew Sweet pointed out that she had misunderstood "the very precise historical legal term, 'death recorded', as evidence of execution, when in fact it indicates the opposite".

Wolf was suspended from Twitter in 2021 after using it to spread myths about the pandemic. Last week GB News was found to have breached the broadcasting code when it allowed Wolf to compare Covid jabs to mass murder without being challenged.

Klein said Doppelganger would "explore what it feels like to watch one's identity slip away in the digital ether, an experience many more of us will have in the age of AI.

"Mostly, it's an attempt to grapple with the wildness of right now – with conspiracy cultures surging and strange left-right alliances emerging and nobody seeming to be quite what they seem … Doppelganger is my attempt at a usable map of our moment in history but to make it, I had to get lost a few times."

Doppelganger will be published in the UK on 12 September



▲ *Naomi Klein, above, is often mistaken for the author Naomi Wolf*

Early birds

Cathedral's falcon chicks ringed before striking out on their own

Steven Morris

High above the ancient stone floor of Salisbury Cathedral, in a landing at the foot of the spire, a curious secular ceremony was taking place yesterday.

Two cardboard boxes containing three creatures, white and fluffy but with fearsome-looking beaks and talons, were brought in. The animals – young peregrine falcons – were measured, weighed and fitted with bright identification rings. A few feathers flew, the falcons nibbled at their handlers, but no harm was done to birds or humans and within minutes they were back outside in their nest.

The peregrines, which nest on the balcony of the south tower, became an internet hit during the pandemic thanks to a webcam, and continue to be a huge springtime draw for the cathedral. But the project is also seen as increasingly important by conservationists because the birds are under threat from a range of dangers, including unscrupulous gamekeepers, pigeon fanciers and falconers who would love to get their hands on a juvenile British bird, and avian flu.

"There's been a resurgence in peregrine numbers," said Nigel Jones, a ringer registered with the British Trust for Ornithology, who carried out the procedure. "But they do face multiple threats. It's likely the population will fall again. This is one way of keeping an eye on them."

The operation began with a twisty climb up 332 steps to the landing 68 metres (223ft) above ground level. Above is the interior of the 123-metre-high spire and a spider's web of medieval scaffolding.

Granville Pictor, a peregrine expert from the Wiltshire Ornithological Society, was sent out to gently encourage the adult birds away and the three chicks – two females, one male – were carried to a table set up beneath the spire.

Phil Sheldrake, the cathedral's nature conservation adviser, held the birds while Jones ringed them.

Jones said: "The bigger birds of prey such as goshawks and peregrines are easier to handle … It's the smaller ones that squirm and have tiny, sharp talons."

Pictor and the cathedral's clerk of works, Gary Price, had the less glamorous job of squeezing on to the parapet where the birds nest to clean off detritus that can block the drains. They returned with the head of a teal duck that the peregrines had feasted on.

Peregrines, the world's fastest animals, capable of hitting 200mph when diving, are known to have bred at the cathedral in the 19th century. They disappeared in 1953 and only returned in 2014.

The trio of three-week-old chicks, all given names – Rex, Rose and Lily – with coronation associations, are likely to remain on the balcony for three more weeks until they can fly. Once fledged, they will stay near the cathedral for at least a month, learning hunting skills from their parents before striking out on their own.



PHOTOGRAPH: FINNBARR WEBSTER/GETTY

▲ *The three peregrine falcon chicks were ringed by the ornithologist Nigel Jones, left, with the help of Ruth Churchill and Phil Sheldrake*





The peregrines nest in Salisbury Cathedral's tower

Today show loses 800,000 listeners as rival stations gain ground

Jim Waterson
Media editor

Radio 4's Today programme has lost 800,000 listeners in the past year to podcasts and rival radio shows, figures reveal.

The agenda-setting breakfast programme has been trying to reinvent itself by adopting a more informal tone for some parts. It has also had to deal with the government cutting access to ministers to stop them being sucked into the daily news cycle.

After the Brexit referendum in 2016, Today reached 7.5 million people a week, but that had fallen to 5.8 million by the start of the year thanks to changing listening habits, the launch of rival stations such as Times Radio and the growth of news podcasts, according to official figures.

Charlotte Moore, the BBC's chief content officer, insisted that the broadcaster was instead "adapting to meet the changing listening needs of our audiences" by focusing on podcasts, such as I'm Not a Monster: The Shamima Begum Story.

She said the decline in Radio 4's audience had been offset by growth in on-demand listening. She said: "The quality of content is world class and Radio 4 remains the home for trusted and impartial news, thought-provoking current affairs, ground-breaking documentaries and boundary-pushing comedy, arts and drama."

Radio 2 maintained its audience at 14.5 million listeners a week, despite a push to attract younger audiences that has alienated some. The figures cover the first three months of the year, before the much-loved mid-morning host Ken Bruce departed for Greatest Hits Radio.

The commercial station invested heavily in advertising before Bruce's arrival and the station's weekly audience has already grown by 26% in a year to 5.3 million listeners, aided by the decision to give Simon Mayo a drivetime slot. The network, which combines a number of local stations with a national DAB station, is one of many trying to pick up disaffected Radio 2 listeners.

Commercial radio listening continues to grow at the BBC's expense, aided by the trend of merging distinctive local stations to produce nationwide content and listeners buying smart speakers that make it easier to try new broadcasters.

One of the beneficiaries of these trends is LBC's James O'Brien, who recorded 1.5 million weekly listeners, his biggest audience yet. LBC is owned by Global Media & Entertainment Limited, whose stations – including Capital, Heart and Smooth – account for 25% of all radio listening.

The figures from Rajar – Radio Joint Audience Research Limited – combine a survey with electronic monitoring.

▼ *Rishi Sunak talks to journalists during his flight to Japan for the G7 summit, which starts tomorrow*
PHOTOGRAPH: STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA



Carmakers urge UK to renegotiate Brexit rules that 'threaten industry'

Jasper Jolly
Mark Sweney

Three big global carmakers yesterday called on the government to renegotiate the Brexit deal, saying rules on where parts are sourced from threaten the future of the British automotive industry.

Ford and Jaguar Land Rover have joined Stellantis, which owns the Vauxhall, Peugeot and Citroën marques, to warn that the transition to electric vehicles will be knocked off course unless the UK and EU delay stricter "rules of origin", due to take effect next year, that could add tariffs on car exports.

Current post-Brexit rules require 40% of an electric vehicle's parts by value to be sourced in the UK or EU if it is to be sold on the other side of the Channel without a 10% trade tariff.

This proportion is due to rise to 45% next year, and because most electric vehicle (EV) batteries are imported from Asia, and batteries make up a large part of the cost of building a car, vehicles made in the UK and the EU are likely to fall foul of the rules.

Stellantis warned yesterday that without a rethink it could be forced to shut some UK operations, putting jobs at risk in an industry that employs 800,000 people in Britain.

Ford, which makes electric cars in Germany and parts in the UK, said the requirement would add "pointless cost to customers wanting to go green". A spokesperson said: "Tariffs will hit both UK- and EU-based manufacturers, so it is vital that the UK and EU come to the table to agree a solution."

Jaguar Land Rover, the UK's largest automotive employer, said the current timing was "unrealistic and counterproductive", and called on the UK and EU to "quickly agree a better implementation solution to avoid destabilising the industry's transition to clean mobility."

It was the first time carmakers had explicitly urged a renegotiation of the Brexit deal.

Manufacturers are demanding the threshold increase be delayed at least until 2027 to allow time for European factories to start producing enough batteries to reduce reliance on Asia.

In an effort to reassure manufacturers, the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, told business leaders at the British Chambers of Commerce annual conference yesterday: "Everyone is trying to develop supply of EV batteries, and so we need to have that supply here in the UK. The closer it's located to the factories that are making the rest of the car, the better.

"And all I would say is: watch this space, because we are very focused on making sure the UK gets that EV manufacturing capacity."

Stellantis has raised doubts about the viability of its plants at Ellesmere Port and Luton, saying tariffs will make it more expensive to produce cars in the UK than in Japan or South Korea. Its plant at Ellesmere Port, which is due to start EV production this year, employs 1,000 workers, while 1,200 are employed in Luton making Vauxhall and Fiat vans. Thousands more people are employed in the UK in businesses that supply parts to the plants.

"To reinforce the sustainability of our manufacturing plants in the UK, the UK must consider its trading arrangements with Europe," Stellantis said, in a submission to a House of Commons inquiry into EV production first reported by the BBC.

The carmaker cited extra costs for the UK if it were forced to import batteries, adding: "If the cost of EV manufacturing in the UK becomes uncompetitive and unsustainable operations will close."

Bosses from Stellantis met the business secretary, Kemi Badenoch, yesterday to discuss the issue. The company also wants arrangements for manufacturing parts in Serbia and Morocco to be reviewed.

The trade deal is due to be renegotiated in 2025 as part of the original Brexit pact between the UK and the EU that was signed by Lord Frost, the UK's chief negotiator, in December 2020.

The effect of the rules-of-origin changes varies between carmakers. One car industry expert said Stellantis's problems may stem from its decision to source batteries initially from China's CATL, the world's largest battery maker. Stellantis's submission noted that it planned to "source batteries from mainland Europe and China".

A government spokesperson said Badenoch had raised this with the EU.



1,000
The number of workers employed by Stellantis's Vauxhall plant in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, above

40%
The proportion of electric vehicle parts that must be sourced in the UK or the EU to avoid a 10% tariff

Continued from page 1

PM accused of being 'out of touch' over cost of living claim

touch he is and disconnected from the reality of life for working people in our country."

Sunak told reporters on the way to the summit: "Economic optimism is increasing, consumer confidence is increasing, growth estimates are being raised."

Official figures for real household disposable income growth had been "very pessimistic" but were now "hugely" better than predicted. "That's a very important measure of people's living standards - hugely outperforming what people thought," he added.

Andrew Bailey, the governor of the Bank of England, struck a more downbeat note when he warned that the central bank would continue to increase interest rates - already at 4.5%, the highest rate since 2008 - if there were signs that inflation was remaining persistent.

Bailey blamed higher food prices and the tight labour market for continued inflationary pressure and predicted that even when headline inflation fell, as expected, these pressures "are unlikely to go away as quickly as they appeared".

The Resolution Foundation said in March that typical household disposable incomes were on course to be lower by the end of 2027 than they were during the Covid pandemic. Similarly, last month Huw Pill, the Bank of England's chief economist, said people needed "to accept" they were poorer. Average living standards have been broadly stagnant since 2007. However, the latest figures for March 2023 showed a 1.3% increase in real household disposable income after four quarters of negative figures.

Sunak acknowledged that things felt "tough" for families but highlighted the government contribution to energy bills. Sounding a positive note on the economy, he said two surveys of business leaders were showing "enormous confidence" in the UK. "That's what's actually happening with the economy, that's what global CEOs who actually have the money and are making investment decisions are saying," he said, adding that he was "glad to have got that off my chest".

Sunak conceded that the UK was dealing with high inflation and elevated borrowing but said he was sticking to his aim to "reduce the tax burden" after dealing with those problems first.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies this week said one in five people would be caught in the higher rate of tax by 2027, leading to pressure on Sunak from his backbenchers to cut rates.

He is also under pressure on the subject of immigration, with



4.5%

Interest rate set by the Bank of England, above, the highest since 2008, and expected to rise further

ministers yet to agree on a series of measures proposed by the home secretary to cut the number of arrivals amid cabinet infighting.

Braverman used a speech to the NatCon conference this week to warn that the government must bring down numbers before the election, while Tory MPs argue they need to ease pressure on housing, education, health and other public services.

On the trip, Sunak backed away from a previous Tory promise to reduce immigration below a quarter of a million.

Asked twice whether he was sticking by the 2019 pledge, he did not say he believed immigration should be that low and said he had "inherited" the current figures, which he wanted to bring down.

Sunak stressed that the difficult task of stopping "illegal" migration by small boats across the Channel was a bigger priority. "I do think most people's number one priority when it comes to migration is illegal migration, that is crystal clear to me."

Sunak also defended the economic benefits of Brexit.

"I introduced freeports - a Brexit benefit around the country attracting jobs and investment to lots of different places," he said. "We cut VAT on sanitary products, we reformed the alcohol duties that mean this summer you will be able to get cheaper beer in pubs. These are all very tangible benefits of Brexit that I've already delivered."

On his trip to the G7, Sunak is expected to unveil the Hiroshima Accord, a new agreement with Japan, aimed at stepping up defence cooperation and improving supply chains. He is also likely to have one-on-one meetings with the French president, Emmanuel Macron, and the Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi.

United States
Hawks visit London to urge tougher line on China

Dan Sabbagh
Defence and security editor

A Republican-led group of China hawks from the US Congress will visit Westminster tomorrow, where they are expected to meet the defence secretary, Ben Wallace, for lunch and press for the UK to take a tougher line on Beijing.

The 11-strong delegation is led by the Republican congressman Mike Gallagher, who chairs a newly created, high-profile China committee. Some fear a strident anti-Beijing tone will alienate centrist and left-leaning politicians in the UK.

Gallagher has called for a total ban on the Chinese-owned app TikTok, and argued in the committee's first primetime hearing that the US and China were locked in an "existential struggle over what life will look like in the 21st century".

The group of eight Republicans and three Democrats - one senator and 10 from the House - will see Wallace informally in a restaurant away from the Ministry of Defence building, where they are almost certain to lobby him in person.

The MoD declined to say whether the meeting meant Wallace supported Gallagher's anti-China positions. "Ministers routinely engage with elected representatives from different governments to discuss our respective policy positions on the key issues," an official said.

Heavy Republican-led China lobbying has been seen as counterproductive in Europe, where critics of Beijing's authoritarianism, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (Ipac), which has global membership, want to build a cross-party consensus for action against Beijing.

One British-based China expert said: "The US committee has a reputation for being exceptionally hawkish on China, and it's clear the energy comes from the Republican side." They warned there could be a clash with Ipac when they meet.

A group of eight British MPs and peers, including members of the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the SNP, are due to hold a joint event with Ipac tomorrow before the lunch with Wallace. They are expected to include the former Conservative leader Iain Duncan Smith, Labour's Rushanara Ali and the Lib Dem peer David Alton.

Gallagher set out the delegation's aspirations in a statement: "We must work hand in hand to stand up to [the Chinese communist party] tech theft, united front work, transnational repression and flagrant violations of our sovereignty."



▲ *Congressman Mike Gallagher is leading the delegation to London*

Vehicle trade tariffs
How Britain is at a competitive disadvantage

What is the problem?
Stellantis says it is struggling to meet the "rules of origin" in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) requiring 40% of an electric vehicle's parts by value to originate in the UK or EU to qualify for trade without tariffs. This threshold is due to rise to 45% next year, then 55% in 2027, and the battery pack will have to come from the UK or EU.

Carmakers who do not comply face tariffs of 10% when selling finished vehicles on the other side of the Channel, making it harder to compete with cheaper rival models from east Asia.

Stellantis, which employs more than 5,000 people in the UK, says these requirements make production in the UK unviable, and it is calling on the government to strike a fresh agreement with the EU to maintain existing rules until 2027.

Ford, which has invested £380m on its e-motor capacity in Halewood, Merseyside, also issued a statement yesterday calling for the three-year delay to the rule change while the UK and EU improve their battery production capacity.

What is at stake if the TCA is not renegotiated?
Stellantis says it will have no choice but to wind down operations, putting thousands of jobs at risk. "If the cost of EV manufacturing in the UK becomes uncompetitive and unsustainable, operations will close," it argues in its submission to a House of Commons inquiry into electric car production.

David Bailey, professor of business economics at the Birmingham business school, calls the problem an "existential threat to the UK car industry", telling BBC Radio 4's Today programme that the rules in the current Brexit agreement "put the UK at a competitive disadvantage".

Was Brexit not an issue before?
Yes: the car industry was one of the most vocal critics of Brexit, warning in 2020 that it would cost the sector £55bn and add £1,900 to the average cost of a car imported from the EU.

So what is different now?
The drive to electrify motoring. In its submission, Stellantis says there will "not be sufficient battery production supplies in the UK or in Europe by 2025 and 2030 despite the fact this is key to meet the TCA under the current rules of origin".

Many companies - including Stellantis - are racing to build "gigafactories" for car batteries in the EU, while one major project is underway in the UK in Sunderland. However, most of those will not be ready for 2024, meaning carmakers across Europe will continue to rely on imports from Asia.

In other words, there is a problem for the automotive industry across Europe because there will not be a level playing field as agreed in the TCA.

Did Stellantis not see this coming?
The carmaker's announcement in 2021 that it would invest £100m to build electric vehicles at Ellesmere Port and was committed to continuing at its Luton site was lauded as a major vote of confidence in the UK post-Brexit.

However, since then the price of materials used in electric car batteries has soared. The Vauxhall maker says these increased costs and other "external headwinds" mean it can no longer afford the planned UK and EU production minimums. **Lisa O'Carroll**

Nuclear arms
US and Russia told to resume treaty talks

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

A global array of former world leaders and defence ministers, as well as nuclear experts and diplomats, have called on the leaders of G7 countries not to let progress on nuclear arms control continue to be the victim of growing geopolitical conflict, such as the war in Ukraine.

The Japanese prime minister, Fumio Kishida, chose Hiroshima - his home town - as the G7 summit venue to lend seriousness to his call to world leaders to at least agree a roadmap to resume nuclear arms control talks.

In February, Russia pulled out of the 2010 New Start treaty, a pact that sets limits on the deployed strategic nuclear arsenals of the world's two largest nuclear powers, although Moscow said it would nevertheless abide by the limits for the moment.

Kishida plans to take world leaders arriving this week for the summit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, where they will see graphic depictions of the US attack in 1945.

An open letter signed by six former heads of state, 20 cabinet-level ministers and experts from 50 different countries, including China, Russia and the US, lends weight to Kishida's G7 theme by saying the world needs more nuclear arms control, not less.

It says: "US-Russia strategic stability talks are in limbo and the New Start treaty, which has played an indispensable role in ensuring reciprocal security, is now in question.

"As the only existing nuclear arms control agreement between the US and Russia, the world's two largest nuclear-armed countries, the treaty's collapse or expiration without a replacement would threaten a destabilising arms race."

Worsening big-power competition is making nuclear war more likely, the leaders warn, and "failure to agree on a new nuclear arms control framework to replace New Start before it expires in February 2026 would also make it more difficult to bring China, France and the UK into multilateral arms control, as all three are not ready to consider limits on their nuclear arsenals until the US and Russia bring down their nuclear stockpiles".

The letter has 256 signatories, including Ernesto Zedillo, the former president of Mexico, Helen Clark, the former prime minister of New Zealand and Ingvar Carlsson, the former prime minister of Sweden.

House prices need to drop even if that means building on green belt, says Starmer

Kiran Stacey
Political correspondent

House prices need to fall in relation to people's incomes, Keir Starmer has said, in a sign the Labour leader is willing to take on the objections of existing homeowners to get more people on to the property ladder.

Starmer told the British Chambers of Commerce annual conference yesterday that he believed prices should come down to make homes more affordable as he accused the Tories of killing the dream of home ownership.

His comments are an unusual admission from a senior politician that falling house prices could be a good thing, and paint a clear dividing line between the two main parties on planning policy.

Starmer said: "Relative to income, I'd like to see [house prices] come down, but the sheer number [of properties] has to go up.

"You will have all seen the statistics about how old people on average now need to be to make sure they're able to own their own home. It's shocking – it's shocking because the basic core security of having your own home matters hugely."

He added: "The building of houses is likely to drop down to the lowest level since the second world war. I'd say the dream, the aspiration of owning your own home, is going to be killed, and we need to do something about that."

Starmer told business leaders in Westminster that his party would be "the builders, not the blockers" and would encourage councils to approve developments on green-belt land.

The comments have already triggered opposition within his own party, with John McDonnell, the former shadow chancellor, tweeting that the green belt "has been the fundamental basis of a battle to protect the environment in working class urban constituencies like mine over decades".

But Starmer's officials believe planning and housebuilding are an area where Labour can gain an electoral advantage over the Conservatives.

Last year, Michael Gove, the housing secretary, dropped the government's mandatory target of building 300,000 new homes a year, making it voluntary instead, following complaints by Tory backbenchers.

Starmer also suggested upending the planning system to create housebuilding regions, instead of leaving planning policy solely in the power of individual councils.

"It would make sense to clump together authorities in certain areas of the country so that together they could plan the housing built in the best places," he added, suggesting that councils along a particular railway line could be grouped together.

Meanwhile, the Labour leader also clarified that his party would not bring an immediate end to the leasehold system if elected next year.

Gove has been criticised in recent days after the Guardian revealed he had abandoned a pledge to abolish all leaseholds, and will instead look to reform the current system.

Starmer also criticised Gove, but explained that he would not abolish existing leaseholds either, only promising to do so for new developments.



▼ *The Labour leader, Keir Starmer, speaking yesterday at the British Chambers of Commerce conference*
PHOTOGRAPH: JORDAN PETTITT/PA

Cheese too pricey? Go without, says Widdecombe

Families should go without cheese sandwiches if they cannot afford the ingredients, Ann Widdecombe has said.

The former Brexit party MEP said there was no "given right" to low food prices, despite being told families "cannot afford to feed their children".

Widdecombe, who rejoined the Reform UK party this year, was on the BBC's Politics Live programme on Tuesday when she was asked what she would say to consumers who could not afford to pay for basics such as the ingredients of a cheese sandwich.

"Well, then you don't do the cheese sandwich," Widdecombe replied. "None of it's new … The problem is we've been decades now without inflation. We've come to regard it as some kind of given right." The government has been urged to intervene in the cost of living crisis as research has found some supermarket products have almost doubled in price over the past year.

According to the consumer group Which?, annual inflation on supermarket own-label budget items rose to 25% in April.

Before Widdecombe made the comments on Politics Live, she had heard of BBC research that showed the cost of a homemade cheese sandwich had risen by a third to 40p a serving. She claimed farmers had "constantly" complained to her about supermarket pricing when she was a Conservative MP.

Lowering inflation was the only way this could be tackled, she said, adding: "You will not get inflation coming down if you continue to have inflationary wage rises."

The Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesperson, Sarah Olney, said: "How out of touch can you get? Ann Widdecombe joins a long line of rightwing politicians who pin the blame on hard-working families for this government's failures."

As the Tories' devastating local election losses set in, one of Sunak's ministers admitted the party had to improve its response to the cost of living crisis. Johnny Mercer, the MP for Plymouth Moor View, said after Labour took control of the local council: "We've got to do better." **Aletha Adu**



▲ *Ann Widdecombe was called 'out of touch' for her sandwich remarks*



What we learned at the NatCon meeting

1 NatCon has made a splash in Tory circles
The last time the roving conference was in London, in 2019, the extent of its Conservative speakers was the perennial backbencher Daniel Kawczynski. This time there were two cabinet ministers – Suella Braverman and Michael Gove – and a series of other Tory MPs, with a resultant boost in media prominence. This is an event, and a set of ideas, that has arrived.

2 Orbán-style birthrate populism has arrived in the UK
Perhaps the speech most reported on was by the Tory backbencher Miriam Cates (below), who partchannelled Viktor Orbán and Georgia Meloni in describing low birth rates as an existential crisis for the west. The populist leaders of Hungary and Italy are explicit in wanting more domestic-born children as against immigrants, a point Cates did not make, although it was arguably implicit. More striking still was her argument that the lack of babies was down to "cultural Marxism that is systematically destroying our children's souls".



3 The NatCon philosophy is quite full-bodied
The conference is run by the Edmund Burke Foundation, a Washington DC-based thinktank run by Yoram Hazony, an Israeli-US writer whose populist-nationalist ideas were seen as influential on Donald Trump's administration. In a sometime freewheeling speech on Monday, Hazony said the UK is plagued by "neo-Marxist" agitators and called for a return to mandatory military service.

4 Not every Conservative speaker is a convert
While Cates leaned into such ideas, as did another backbencher, Danny Kruger, who warned against what he described, intriguingly, as "a mix of Marxism and narcissism and paganism, self worship and nature worship", others were more wary. Jacob Rees-Mogg gave a fairly standard speech on economic liberalism, while Gove actively warned against an over-reliance on populism as an electoral tool.

5 The same could be said for the audience
NatCon was reasonably well attended, at best three-quarters filling the 1,000-capacity main hall of the Emmanuel Centre in Westminster. While there were some earnest US thinktank acolytes – presumably baffled as to why there was a top-hatted protester





Jacob Rees-Mogg and Michael Gove - plus some of the protesters at the conference

outside blasting the Benny Hill - the domestic contingent comprised a mixed bag of culture warriors, free traders, assorted economic liberals, and the merely curious. Some confessed to being discomfited, even embarrassed, by the more off-piste speakers.

6 Conservative internal discipline is slipping
While Rishi Sunak will be used to noises-off from the likes of Cates and Kruger, six months into his prime ministership he will note how Braverman, the home secretary, used her speech to ramp up her culture war credentials and, more notably still, in effect argue against the immigration policy she oversees. It was also quite something to see Rees-Mogg describe mandatory voter ID, a policy he endorsed in cabinet, as an attempt to gerrymander elections in favour of the Tories.

7 An electoral cul-de-sac?
While the full NatCon philosophy remains a niche view among Conservatives, it is clear some would-be successors to Sunak, notably Braverman (right), see wider culture war clashes as fertile ground.



However, it remains to be seen whether the UK is as receptive to this as the US, not least because the primary American audience for such views - evangelical Christians - are both much less numerous and very different in outlook here. Some experts also argue that an area where UK voters do pay attention, immigration, is one in which the Tories have arguably tacked as far to the right as they can.

8 NatCon is an unsavoury pool for the Tories to dip a toe into
For all the insistences from the stage that the conference and the Conservative party are a "broad church", some Tory MPs will be alarmed at the company their colleagues kept. One speech, by Kevin Roberts, president of the Heritage Foundation, a US thinktank, blamed "globalists" for the world's political problems and said leftwingers wanted to end democracy to impose their opinions.
David Starkey, right, the controversial historian, used his address to claim that racial justice groups are "jealous" of the primacy of the Holocaust, and want this replaced by slavery.



9 What cost of living crisis?
One of the most obvious features of the gathering, as remarked on by some delegates, was the way culture war talking points and often rarefied debates about nationalism versus liberalism pushed out more or less all discussion of the subjects UK voters mainly care about. To an extent, that is the point of NatCon, as an almost philosophical talking shop, not a policy forum. But there is a danger it could seem slightly out of touch.

10 The strange case of the leftwing straw man
One of the tropes from the stage was the spectre of the "woke left", sometimes cast as Marxists, coming for western heritage and statues, infiltrating schools and universities, in a few cases seeking the overthrow of everything that defines Britain. The electoral challenge in trying to make this argument is that the primary leftwing politician in the UK is Keir Starmer, someone whose friends would probably not describe as a radical, and who makes a less-than-convincing bogeyman. **Peter Walker**

◀ *A delegate at the National Conservatism conference takes a break during a speech. The gathering at the Emmanuel Centre in Westminster was run by a rightwing US thinktank*
PHOTOGRAPH: TOM NICHOLSON/ SHUTTERSTOCK

Sketch
John Crace



Rayner did not sparkle at the dispatch box. Luckily she was facing deferential Dowden

Cometh the hour, cometh the man. At last, a deputy whom Rishi Sunak can trust. Trust to be thoroughly mediocre. The last thing an interim prime minister - there's an unquestionable lightness of being to Rish!: even he doesn't seem to know what he stands for - who is grooming his party for opposition really wants is a number two biting at his heels.

Oliver Dowden is the perfect fit. A man who had never dreamed of being anything so grand as a deputy prime minister. A cross between a gentleman's gentleman and a parody character from a 1970s sitcom, someone for whom deference is ingrained. Olive, as he is known by many, is that rare politician: a man who is only too aware of his many limitations. His one purpose in life is to fail, and therefore to make his boss look good. And Sunak needs all the help he can get. Everything he touches is falling apart. Half his cabinet are busy freelancing, making up policy on the hoof. The other half are merely comatose.

With Rish! en route to Japan via Iceland - who would have guessed the EU wouldn't be interested in the UK's asylum proposals? - it was left to Dowden to face his first deputy prime minister's questions. Labour's Angela Rayner began by welcoming Olive as the third deputy prime minister she had faced across the dispatch box. There was a lot of head scratching on the sparsely populated benches - Dowden's reputation precedes him - as they tried to remember the third. Then it came to them. Those glorious six weeks when Thérèse Coffey was one step removed from No 10. The laughs we had.

> *Olive is that rare politician: a man only too aware of his many limitations. His one purpose is to make his boss look good*

Could she remind Dowden that he had resigned as party chairman when the Tories lost 300 seats in the local elections in 2022? Who did he think might be responsible for the loss of 1,000 seats earlier this month? Olive tried and failed not to glance at the new party chair, Greg Hands, who was sitting further down the frontbench. Hands blushed and tried to pretend he wasn't there.

Dowden got one good gag in about Ed Davey being Keir Starmer's preferred deputy but after that it was all downhill. Not that Rayner was on top form herself. But then she didn't really need a sprinkling of stardust. All she had to do was stand vaguely upright to take the convincing win. "Er … you supported Jeremy Corbyn in 2019," said Olive, his voice becoming more and more shrill the more desperate he became. Um, yes. And he had supported Boris Johnson at the same election. And look how that had ended.

The deputy prime minister couldn't stop digging. He was proud of the government's record. Proud that NHS waiting lists weren't coming down. Proud that Britain had the worst growth in the G7. Proud that crime rates were soaring. Proud that there were more food banks than ever before. At least, that's what he would have said if he hadn't started lying through his teeth. He even tried to outdo Rayner on her working-class credentials. That was never going to work.

Rayner concluded with some observations about the three-day National Conservatism conference that was winding up just across the road in Westminster. The mad, the bad and the sad creating a new ideology for a Tory party that had run its course in government, a Tory party that couldn't - as Jacob Rees-Mogg had admitted - even gerrymander a vote properly.

Dorset police hold local man over arson attacks on vehicles

Steven Morris

Detectives investigating a string of apparently random arson attacks on cars in and around a quiet Dorset town are questioning a man in his 40s. The local man, who has not been named by police, was arrested on suspicion of arson, Dorset police said yesterday.

Police reassured residents of Wimborne Minster, who have been shocked by the attacks, that extra patrols would continue to take place and urged anyone with home CCTV, doorbell cameras or dashcams to check their footage to see if there is anything that could help.

Thirteen vehicles and two properties were destroyed or damaged on Sunday night and the early hours of Monday morning. In the most serious attack, a car was set on fire in the passageway to a historic courtyard, almost trapping a mother and her two daughters inside a flat.

The first fire is believed to have been started in Broadstone village, on the outskirts of Poole, but the majority took place three miles north in Wimborne, famed for its minster church, model village and Thomas Hardy connections.

Dorset police said in a statement: "A full investigation was launched and following a number of inquiries a local man aged in his 40s has been arrested on suspicion of arson."

Ch Insp Andy Edwards said: "I would like to thank everyone who responded to our appeals for information. I want to reassure residents that officers from our neighbourhood policing teams will continue to carry out enhanced patrols in the area.

"Also, I urge anyone who may have home CCTV or doorbell cameras and anyone with dashcam to check their footage to see if there is anything of relevance that could help us."

On Tuesday, it emerged that Lisa Dodd, a nurse, had managed to warn Ruth Thompson and her two daughters as they slept close to the passageway blaze.

"If the engine had exploded and set the door on fire there would have been no way out," said Dodd.

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Met denies being put under pressure to arrest coronation protesters

Rajeev Syal
Home affairs editor

A senior Metropolitan police officer has denied he was put under political pressure to arrest protesters during the King Charles's coronation, as a human rights barrister claimed the use of new protest laws would harm democracy.

The Met has been under scrutiny for arrests made around the time of the event, including those of volunteers who handed out rape alarms to women and eight members of the anti-monarchist group Republic, which had liaised with officers for months to organise its protest.

Alice Chambers, a supporter of the royal family who was held in custody for 13 hours after being mistaken for a protester on the Mall, has also lodged a complaint.

During a session of the home affairs select committee, which was briefly interrupted by Just Stop Oil protesters, MPs were scrutinising the use of laws – including the new Public Order Act – to arrest people before they had committed an offence.

The session heard that 52 protest-related arrests were made as part of the coronation operation, which was codenamed Golden Orb.

Asked if he had been under political pressure to arrest protesters, the Met's temporary assistant commissioner, Matt Twist, told MPs: "I felt under no pressure politically. I felt pressure to deliver a safe and secure operation, but that was because of the fact that it was a once-in-a-lifetime event for so many people."

Suzie Melvin, a Night Stars volunteer at Westminster city council who hands out rape alarms to vulnerable women, said she and colleagues were arrested in Soho the night before the coronation despite her organisation working in partnership with the Met.



▲ *Alice Chambers, a royal supporter who was held in custody for 13 hours*

Explaining how police officers approached her team members on Friday 5 May, wanting to stop and search them, she told MPs: "We did the best that we could to try to explain who we were to the officers. Then they also searched the church we base ourselves out of.

"We were told we were going to be arrested. We were then taken in police vans to Walworth police station, where we were held.

"I was interviewed at approximately 1pm the following day [Saturday 6 May] and we were released a little bit after 4pm."

The committee chair, Labour MP Diana Johnson, said it was "such a long time for you to be detained" and added that she was "a bit speechless having heard that account".

Members of Republic were detained under the Public Order Act before a rally organised in consultation with the Met after officers found straps in a van, which protesters said were to be used to secure placards. They were held for almost 16 hours before being released without charge.

The group's chief executive, Graham Smith, said he and his colleagues had been surrounded by large numbers of officers before they had seen inside their van or knew the straps were there. "I had the impression that they had turned up with the intention of detaining us," he said.

Smith told the committee he had been prevented from calling a senior officer who might have been able to confirm that he had liaised closely with the police.

"We gave every piece of information we possibly could … they made clear there were no concerns. We never had any intention of doing anything unlawful or disruptive."

The human rights lawyer Adam Wagner told MPs the arrest of peaceful protesters would damage democracy by discouraging ordinary citizens from exercising their rights.

He said he could entirely understand why the public would be worried: "These are really oppressive potential powers that are necessary to prevent crime, but they turn peaceful protest, a really important part of democracy, into something which is a real personal risk."



◀ *Johnny Depp with Maïwenn, the director of the film that offered him his first leading role in three years*
PHOTOGRAPH: VIANNEY LE CAER/INVISION/AP

Tearful Johnny Depp gets seven-minute standing ovation on his return to Cannes

Xan Brooks

The protesters were banned, the red carpet rolled out and Johnny Depp strolled into Cannes like a conquering hero yesterday.

He blew kisses, shook hands and briefly dabbed at his eyes. He received a standing ovation that lasted nearly seven minutes. "For a couple of seconds it scared me," the actor told reporters afterwards. "It was like being stuck in a loop. The energy of the reaction, it just seemed to go on and on."

Depp is in town for the premiere of Jeanne du Barry, the opening picture at the Cannes film festival. For his supporters, the visit marks the first step in the redemption of a one-time Hollywood superstar still bruised from an ugly legal battle with his ex-wife Amber Heard and struggling to repair his damaged reputation.

His critics, however, view it differently. They accuse the festival of in effect handing a free pass to an alleged domestic abuser.

Shot by the French actor-director Maïwenn and partly backed by Saudi cash, Jeanne du Barry is a busy historical romp that casts Depp in the role of a lovable, lusty King Louis XV. But the film risked being relegated to the role of a casual bystander in a wider, off-screen storm as the 59-year-old arrived - fashionably late - to face the international press.

Jeanne du Barry is Depp's first leading role in three years. As a result of Heard's allegations of abuse - which Depp denies - he was dropped from the lucrative Fantastic Beasts franchise and shunned by US studios. At Cannes, though, he appeared keen to frame himself as a victim of groupthink and cancel culture.

"Do I feel boycotted by Hollywood?" he said. "Well, you'd have to not have a pulse not to feel that way. Of course, when you're asked to resign from a film because of [allegations] that's just vowels and consonants floating in the air, you do feel a bit boycotted. But I don't think about Hollywood. I don't have much need of Hollywood because it's a weird time [there]. Everyone wants to be themselves, but they can't because they feel they have to fall in line."

The city of Cannes has banned public protests this year, forcing Depp's critics to take their objections online. In the run-up to the festival, the journalist Eve Barlow - reportedly a friend of Heard - launched a social media campaign, #CannesYouNot, that charges the event with "supporting abusers" and posted pictures of Depp alongside images of Harvey Weinstein and Roman Polanski, both Cannes fixtures in previous years.

Elsewhere the recently retired French actor Adèle Haenel published an open letter that claimed the festival had a history of institutionalised misogyny.

On the eve of Depp's arrival, the festival's director, Thierry Frémaux, pushed back, insisting that the actor had a legal right to be in Cannes. "If Johnny Depp had been banned from acting in a film - or the film itself was banned - we wouldn't be talking about it here," he said.

Depp, for his part, dismissed the allegations against him as "abstract whispers". He added: "The majority of what you've read about my life these past five years is fantastically, horrifically written fiction."

He appeared to be on safer ground when discussing the merits of Jeanne du Barry, which necessitated him acting entirely in French. "My first question to Maïwenn was, 'Maybe you want to try a French guy?' he recalled. "So I thought it was very brave of her to choose some hillbilly from Kentucky to play Louis XV."

As well as promoting Maïwenn's production, Depp is also in Cannes to raise backing for a biopic of the Italian painter Amedeo Modigliani.

"I've seen the word comeback being used," Depp said. "And I keep wondering about that because I didn't really go anywhere.

"Maybe people stopped calling me out of fear. But I didn't go nowhere. I've been sitting around."

Film review

Imposing tapestry of Dutch life under Nazis

Occupied City
Cannes film festival
★★★★★

Peter Bradshaw

Steve McQueen's monumental film is a vast survey-meditation on the wartime history and psychogeography of his adopted city, Amsterdam, based on his wife Bianca Stigter's Dutch-language book Atlas of an Occupied City, Amsterdam 1940-1945.

With a calm, undemonstrative narrative voiceover from Melanie Hyams, the film tracks day-to-day life in Amsterdam under Nazi rule. It spans the invasion in 1940, the establishment of the NSB (the collaborationist Dutch Nazi party), the brutal repression and deportation of Jewish populations to the death camps, and then the "hunger winter" of 1944-45 as food and fuel became scarce in the city and the Nazis displayed a gruesome mix of panic and fanaticism as the allies closed in.

McQueen in effect represents the maps and figure legends of the book on screen: the camera shows us the modern-day indoor and outdoor scenes on individual streets, canals, squares, buildings and jetties where the barbarity unfolded - showing them with 21st-century people going about their business while Hyams's narration coolly summarises what happened in each particular spot. A prison yard where Jews were forced to parade around chanting "I am a Jew, beat me to death, it's my own fault" is now an open space overlooked by the Hard Rock Cafe. The headquarters of the secret police was on the site of what is now a school.

Occupied City lasts a little more than four hours, with an intermission, and the effect is something like a huge cinematic frieze or tapestry, or perhaps an installation. But it is also like an old-fashioned "city symphony" movie and, in its approach, perhaps bears the influence of Claude Lanzmann's Shoah. It asks hard questions of what we think about the gulf between past and present.

When we think about Nazi rule in Amsterdam, we think of … what? Flickering black-and-white newsreel footage, semi-familiar landmarks in monochrome, images of swastikas, an alien display of history, vacuum-sealed in the past. But McQueen shows us the modern world, in 4K resolution, and there is a gradual realisation that for those involved in 1940, the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam happened just like this: in living colour in the here-and-now, with modern hairstyles and clothes.



▲ *Occupied City juxtaposes scenes from Amsterdam then and now*

Occasionally, there is a weird frisson. Some of McQueen's footage was shot during the Covid lockdown and the juxtaposition of this with Nazi oppression takes us - unintentionally - perhaps a little close to GB News territory.

In its scale and seriousness, Occupied City allows its emotional implication to amass over its running time. The effect is mysterious and moving.

Tory peer's family used 'no-fault' eviction ahead of Gove bringing in ban

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

The family of a billionaire Tory landlord used a "no-fault" eviction to throw out a tenant after he refused a £1,680 annual rent increase having reported mould, damp and cold, the Guardian can reveal.

The flat is part of a rental portfolio part-owned by Zameer Choudrey, who has donated £1.3m to the Conservatives through his wholesale company Bestway, which has a £4.5bn-a-year turnover.

He shares ownership of a £15m mansion in Hampstead and sits on the government benches in the Lords, which will scrutinise the renters reform bill announced this week, which sets out to ban the very "section 21" no-fault eviction he used.

Apolo Siskos, a data expert, was paying £1,400 a month for the one-bed flat in Golders Green in north-west London. He complained that the heating was faulty, that he had to wait four months for a broken window to be fixed, and that his health was affected by damp and mould exacerbated by a roof leak – none of which was fixed for more than a year, he claimed.

When the Choudreys' estate agent told Siskos in February that the landlord wanted to raise the rent by 10%, he replied saying he wanted a rent cut owing to the problems. Two weeks later, the agent said the landlord had decided to take the property back, fix the problems and remarket it at a higher rent. Siskos was sent a section 21 eviction notice of possession.

£1.3m
Figure for donations made by Zameer Choudrey to the Tory party through his Bestway company

68
Number of Conservative MPs – nearly one in five – who are private landlords, according to 38 Degrees

The case will prove embarrassing for the Conservatives after Michael Gove, the secretary of state for levelling up, housing and communities, said yesterday that he would "make sure section 21 goes" and lambasted "unscrupulous landlords" who used it "to intimidate people into either accepting extortionate rent rises or keeping shtoom about the poor standard of their flats".

The flat is registered to a Channel Islands property holding company, which in turn is owned by the peer and his two sons, Umair and Haider, according to filings registered in Guernsey. Lord Choudrey declares in the Lords' register of interests that he has multiple "investment properties in London … from which rental income is received".

Siskos told the Guardian it was contradictory for a Conservative member of the Lords to use a section 21 eviction notice while it was government policy to abolish the practice. "He was using the clause to evict me while it is still legal," he said. "It is obviously legitimate, but it is immoral."

Theresa May promised in April 2019 to ban no-fault evictions and Boris Johnson repeated the pledge in the Conservatives' December 2019 election manifesto. Gove announced yesterday that more than 54,000 households in the private rented sector in England had been threatened with a no-fault eviction since the promise was first made.



'We need penalties when landlords are so rich and still don't fix the problems'

Apolo Siskos
Choudrey family tenant

A representative of the Choudrey family said: "The family would never comment on private matters related to specific individuals, but they always endeavour to treat tenants fairly and to respond to issues in a timely manner, using trusted third-party service providers." They said Lord Choudrey had no involvement in the management of the property.

Siskos alleges his complaints were not addressed by Choudrey's son Umair, who was the point of contact for the rental. He said a cracked window in 2021 was not fixed for four months and a leak in the roof was not fixed over a year after he had complained about it. Mould, which he said in November 2022 was affecting his health including asthma and breathing problems, was not tackled, he claimed.

Fourteen months after raising several problems, in December 2022 he alerted the environmental health team at the London Borough of Barnet complaining: "I have been chasing a lot." The following month he told the estate agent: "Our landlord is not even responding to our emails and texts."

He described his treatment as "obviously unfair" and said: "There should be compensation and penalties when landlords are so rich and still don't fix the problems."

The case comes before a likely parliamentary tussle over new laws governing evictions in the private rented sector, which now accommodates 11 million people in England. Gove wants to ban no-fault evictions to protect tenants from being thrown out if they complain. But he also wants to extend powers to evict tenants who behave "antisocially".

A total of 68 Conservative MPs – nearly one in five – are currently private landlords, according to research by a campaign group, 38 Degrees.

onefamily
modern family finance

Notice of the Annual General Meeting of Family Assurance Friendly Society Limited

To be held at **11am on Thursday 15th June 2023,** at **Ironworks Studios, 30 Cheapside, Brighton, BN1 4GD**

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 is available at **www.onefamily.com/agm** or on request from the Secretary, OneFamily, 16-17 West Street, Brighton BN1 2RL, or by emailing members@onefamily.com

Any member entitled to vote at the above meeting may appoint a representative to attend and vote on his/her behalf and you should appoint the Chair for this purpose. For a form of proxy to be valid it must reach the independent scrutineers, Civica Election Services, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW at least 48 hours before the time fixed for the meeting, that is not later than 11am on Tuesday 13 June 2023.

A form of proxy will be sent to each member who is entitled to vote and has opted into receiving the AGM pack. Further forms are available on request from the Secretary.

AGM Agenda

Ordinary Business
By ordinary resolution

1. To receive the financial statements of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2022.
2. To approve the Directors' Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 December 2022.
3. To re-elect Steven James Colsell as a member of the Board of Directors.
4. To elect Alison Gaye Davies as a member of the Board of Directors.
5. To re-elect Melanie Elizabeth Hind as a member of the Board of Directors.
6. To re-elect Graham John Lindsay as a member of the Board of Directors.
7. To re-elect Sally Angela Helen Williams as a member of the Board of Directors.
8. To re-elect Jamshaid Islam as a member of the Board of Directors.
9. To re-elect Shingirai Thaddeus Nyahasha as a member of the Board of Directors.
10. To re-appoint Deloitte LLP as auditor to the Society for 2023.
11. To transact any other ordinary business of the Society.

By order of the Board of Directors
S J Allford, Secretary
May 2023

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Academics accuse Oxford student union of using threats to stop debate

Richard Adams
Education editor

A group of Oxford academics claim "coercion and financial threats" are being used to force the Oxford Union debating society to cancel an appearance by Kathleen Stock.

Stock, a former university professor who argues that transgender people cannot expect all the rights afforded by biological sex, is due to speak at the Oxford Union later this month. Her appearance is opposed by several LGBTQ+ groups and student organisations in the city.

In a letter published in the Daily Telegraph, the academics said they "wholeheartedly condemn" a decision by the Oxford University student union (OUSU) to bar the Oxford Union from having a stall at the university's freshers fair, which the group say is an attempt to cut the Oxford Union off from recruiting new members as a result of the invitation to Stock.

"This is dangerous territory. Universities exist, among other things, to promote free inquiry and the disinterested pursuit of the truth by means of reasoned argument. To resort to coercion and financial threats when unable to secure one's preferred outcome in debate would represent a profound failure to live up to these ideals," the letter states.

The 45 signatories include the author Richard Dawkins; Timothy Williamson, the university's Wykeham professor of logic; Nigel Biggar, a professor of theology; and Prof Carl Heneghan, director of the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine.

OUSU said its decision was unconnected to Stock's appearance and that the motion passed by its student council related to "longstanding" concerns about student welfare.

"The motion was unrelated to Dr Stock's intended talk. It did not mention Dr Stock or any other speaker at the Oxford Union, instead citing longstanding concerns relating to alleged bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination and data privacy breaches which affect students," it said.

"The motion was democratically passed at a meeting of students, following a debate which also did not mention Dr Stock. We are committed to freedom of expression and freedom of speech and will defend the right of people to have controversial and unpopular ideas debated as an integral part of university life and the student experience."

The Oxford Union is independent of the university, and bills itself as "the world's most prestigious speaker and debating society", with a 200-year record of debating controversial topics and inviting high-profile speakers. It relies on donations, corporate support and membership fees paid by current students of nearly £300.

Matthew Dick, the Oxford Union's current president, said he was not sure what the financial implications of the OUSU's decision would be.





▲ *The Oxford Union, which is independent of Oxford University, above, is being targeted over its plans to debate transgender rights, according to a letter signed by academics including Richard Dawkins, below* PHOTOGRAPH: ALAMY

Study suggests 'skinny jab' may cut child obesity

Tobi Thomas

Nearly half of children given the "skinny jab" lost enough weight to no longer be classed as clinically obese, according to a US study.

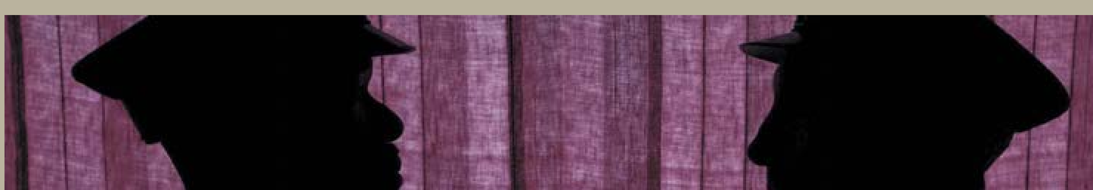
A team led by Dr Aaron Kelly, of the University of Minnesota, looked at 201 clinically obese adolescents. Alongside having lifestyle counselling, 134 young people aged 12-18 received one dose of 2.4mg of semaglutide a week for 68 weeks, while 67 had a placebo. Semaglutide, which can be sold as Ozempic, is often used to treat type 2 diabetes by suppressing appetite, but can also be used for long-term weight management.

The study's results, presented at the European Congress on Obesity in Dublin, found 12% of those on the placebo were no longer be classed as clinically obese, compared with 45% of those taking semaglutide. By the end of the study, 74% of those given semaglutide had improved by at least one BMI category, compared with 19% on the placebo.

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The Guardian Newsletters

World

North Carolina overrides governor's veto and bans abortion after 12 weeks

Makaelah Walters
Durham, North Carolina

North Carolina has passed legislation banning most abortions later than 12 weeks of pregnancy after the state's Republican-controlled general assembly successfully overrode the Democratic governor's veto on Tuesday evening.

Both the state's senate and house of representatives voted along party lines, with the senate voting 30-20. The house completed the second and final part of the override with a vote of 72-48. The bill will repeal the current law, which bans abortions after 20 weeks.

The move is expected to deal a fresh blow to one of the last bastions of abortion access in the south, which has been significantly curtailed after the supreme court overturned the 1973 Roe v Wade ruling last year.

It is part of a growing push across the US to further cripple abortion protection. On Tuesday Republicans were also pushing for stricter abortion bans in South Carolina and Nebraska. Both debates are continuing despite the party's recent losses in states where it is focusing on abortion limits.

On Saturday, North Carolina's governor, Roy Cooper, a Democrat, had honoured a vow he made to his state to protect reproductive rights by vetoing Senate Bill 20 during a public rally in Raleigh, which was attended by thousands.

Cooper condemned the decision to override his veto and move forward with the ban, and said he would do "everything I can to protect abortion access in North Carolina, because women's lives depend on it".

Last week, Republicans rushed the bill through the house, drawing criticism from other legislators and abortion rights advocates.

The 46-page bill, in addition to banning abortion after 12 weeks, extends the waiting period for people seeking abortions to 72 hours, requires providers to send sensitive information to the state department of health and human services, and requires clinics to obtain special licensing that would result in clinic closures throughout the state.

The new restrictions pose grave concerns for abortion providers, who have already witnessed a sharp rise in patients travelling to North Carolina for abortion care after Roe v Wade was overturned.

During Tuesday's debate, state Democrats spoke out against the new restrictions. Diamond Staton-Williams, the house representative for Cabarrus county, even shared her own abortion story and how it helped her family. She said: "It was not an easy decision at all, it was not made lightly or frivolously. I knew that for my family to prosper and to continue with the opportunities in front of us, this was the best decision for us."

> *'This will make it even more difficult for women to get the reproductive healthcare they need'*
>
> **Karine Jean-Pierre**
> *White House press office*

The White House also issued a statement condemning the decision.

"Today, Republican state legislators in North Carolina overturned Governor Roy Cooper's veto of a dangerous bill that is out of touch with the majority of North Carolinians and will make it even more difficult for women to get the reproductive healthcare they need," said the press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre.

North Carolina has a unique position as an abortion provider in the south, especially after the overturn of Roe v Wade. A third of North Carolina patients seeking abortions since the supreme court decision come from outside the state, Planned Parenthood estimates.

One report shows the number of people travelling to North Carolina for abortion care rose by 37% since last summer as restrictions were tightened in neighbouring southern states. Others show an average increase of 788 patients monthly after the supreme court's decision.

In recent days, advocates who foresaw the overturning of the governor's veto had sprung into action hoping to sway legislators who showed support for reproductive rights in the past, such as Tricia Cotham, who switched parties last month.

Planned Parenthood Votes! South Atlantic launched a television advertising campaign reminding viewers of the Republican state representative Ted Davis's promise to uphold North Carolina's 20-week limit.

The group also supported Cooper's efforts to reach constituents and providers in Mecklenburg, Guilford and New Hanover counties last week during a series of round table discussions. At each talk, the governor informed constituents about the contents of the bill.

Cooper also called out Republican politicians in the state who had previously said they would protect abortion access in the state.

But the efforts were quashed on Tuesday when they remained aligned with the rest of their party.

"All we need is one person of conscience," Cooper had said at one discussion. "One person who knows that this is wrong and is not afraid to stand up to party leadership."

Additional reporting **Agencies**



▲ *Pro-choice activists are removed from North Carolina's assembly after it reversed its status as a bastion of reproductive rights* PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS SEWARD/AP



Floods in Italy leave nine people dead and thousands homeless

Angela Giuffrida
Rome

Nine people have died and thousands have been evacuated from their homes after heavy storms wreaked havoc in the northern Italian region of Emilia-Romagna, causing severe flooding and landslides.

People sought refuge on the rooftops of their homes after 21 rivers broke their banks, submerging entire towns.

Among the victims were an elderly man and a couple who owned a company in the agriculture sector, according to Corriere della Sera.

The body of a German woman was found on a beach in Cesenatico, a town by the Adriatic coast, but it is unclear if she was killed in the storms. Others are still reported missing.

The Emilia-Romagna Formula One Grand Prix scheduled for this weekend has been cancelled.

"The only irreparable thing in this emergency are the nine people who lost their lives, and we hope there are no more," said Stefano Bonaccini, president of the region.

Italy's civil protection agency said yesterday there could be worse to come. "The rainfall is not over, it will continue for several hours," the agency's chief, Titti Postiglione, told Sky TG24 news. "We are facing a very, very complicated situation."

There has been heavy rain across Italy in recent days but the worst-affected area has been Emilia-Romagna and parts of the central Marche region, where 12 people died in floods last September.

In a video shared on social media, people trapped in their homes in Faenza, a city in Ravenna province, could be heard shouting for help. Massimo Isola, Faenza's mayor, said: "We had a night we will never forget. We've never known such flooding."

Enzo Lattuca, the mayor of Cesena,

Up in smoke
Regulators across the world react to vaping
Page 23



A precious resource
Israel uses water to control the West Bank
Page 24





◀ People walk through flood waters in Castel Bolognese, near the now closed Formula One track at Imola in the Emilia-Romagna region. Below, an inundated rural area close to Bologna; above, rescuers search a car park in Cesena, south of Bologna, for missing persons after thousands of people in the region were evacuated from their homes

PHOTOGRAPHS: PIERO CRUCIATTI/ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY; MAX CAVALLARI/ANSA/ZUMA/SHUTTERSTOCK



where citizens swam through the floods to rescue others, said: "The situation is disastrous, it's a catastrophe, and the rain has not yet finished." He said yesterday that the Savio River was starting to swell again.

A bridge that connected Motta-Budrio with San Martino in the area of Bologna collapsed overnight. "Do not go near it," Italy's fire service warned. "There is a gas pipeline close by which also seems to be affected."

Five thousand people were evacuated from their homes in Ravenna. "It's probably the worst night in the history of Romagna," Michele de Pascale, the mayor of Ravenna, told Rai radio. "Ravenna is unrecognisable for the damage it has suffered."



Dario Nardella, the mayor of Florence, said mountain villages on the Romagna side of the Mugello valley had been cut off due to landslides.

In a post on social media, Italy's prime minister, Giorgia Meloni, expressed her "total closeness to the affected population", adding that the government was closely monitoring the situation.

The deputy prime minister, Antonio Tajani, said the government would "do everything to help the population hit by the flooding".

"From those evacuated to the agricultural companies that have lost entire harvests," he added.

"The rescue forces and volunteers are heroes. I pray for the victims and their families."

Weather-related disasters have been on the rise in Italy, a country deemed particularly vulnerable to the climate crisis. Emilia-Romagna and parts of Marche were also affected by severe flooding in early May in which two people died.

In 2022, the hottest year on record in Italy, 310 extreme weather events were registered, causing the deaths of 29 people, according to Legambiente, an environmental group.

In late November, 12 people, including several children, died in a landslide on the island of Ischia.

A report in 2021 by Ispra, the Italian government's environment agency, said 7,423 municipalities (93.4% of the total) were at risk of landslides, floods and coastal erosion. However, the government has done little to mitigate against the risk.

Before the latest floods, Emilia-Romagna and other areas of northern Italy were blighted by a drought that dried out land, reducing its capacity to absorb water.

Sport **Formula One** *Page 31* →

Ecuadorian president dissolves congress in bid to avoid impeachment

Tom Phillips
Dan Collyns *Quito*

Ecuador's embattled president, Guillermo Lasso, dissolved congress yesterday morning in an attempt to escape impeachment – a radical manoeuvre that comes against a backdrop of wider democratic backsliding and political turbulence across Latin America.

Lasso announced the dramatic move a day after the start of an impeachment trial that seemed likely to lead to his removal from power in the coming days.

"Ecuadorian women and men: this is the best decision to find a constitutional way out of the political crisis … and give the people of Ecuador the chance to decide their future at the next elections," tweeted the 67-year-old conservative businessman, who was elected in April 2021 after defeating the leftist economist Andrés Arauz.

Lasso's decision to trigger a constitutional "mutual death" clause dissolving the 137-member national assembly will allow him to govern without the legislature until fresh elections are held.

Some observers believe it could benefit the president, who will be allowed to stand in that contest.

However, the suspension of congress is also a setback to Ecuador's democracy and is the latest flare-up of political disruption in a region that has this year grappled with an uprising in the Peruvian Andes, accelerating authoritarian crackdowns in Nicaragua and El Salvador, an alleged military coup attempt in Brazil, democratic regression in Mexico and an explosion of gang violence in Haiti.

Lasso's 11-page decree, which comes into force immediately, states that his decision was taken as a result of "severe political crisis and domestic upheaval" and orders electoral authorities to call elections in the next seven days. The decree describes the measure as a way of preventing a "violent escalation" such as the mass protests that brought the capital, Quito, and other parts of the country to a standstill in June last year.



Guillermo Lasso had faced being impeached this week

In his inaugural speech after taking power in May 2021, Lasso called himself a "man of action" who would lead Ecuador's 18 million citizens into an "eternally democratic" future of social equality and economic stability. But the former banker has faced major obstacles – including the fallout from the pandemic and a horrifying surge in drug-related violence linked to the growing presence of Mexican cartels – and has repeatedly locked horns with the opposition-controlled national assembly.

Lasso survived the opposition's first attempt to impeach him, in June last year, but looked likely to be removed from office this week after the start of an impeachment hearing based on embezzlement accusations, which he disputes. His decree means those proceedings will end.

Opposition legislators needed 92 votes, out of 137, to remove Lasso in a session of the national assembly which began on Tuesday.

"The only way out is the impeachment and exit of the president of the republic, Guillermo Lasso," said Viviana Veloz, an opposition legislator who was leading the impeachment process.

Supporters of the president had gathered outside the assembly on Tuesday, but by yesterday morning police and members of the military had encircled the building, allowing no one inside.

Earlier, the chief of the joint command of the armed forces, Nelson Proaño, had pledged "absolute respect for the constitution and the laws" in support of Lasso's move.

Santiago Basabe, a political scientist at the Latin American Institute of Social Sciences in Quito, said the move would "generate a political balance in the country" as fresh elections would allow for an exit to the current political crisis.

But Leonidas Iza, the leader of the powerful Conaie Indigenous federation, slammed Lasso's move, tweeting: "Not having the necessary votes to save himself from imminent dismissal, Lasso carries out a cowardly self-coup with the help of the police and the armed forces, without citizen support, turning himself into an imminent dictatorship."

The group, which can muster tens of thousands for street demonstrations, had previously threatened to hold fresh marches this week.

Last year, Conaie led protests throughout Ecuador that almost unseated Lasso. It was also at the forefront of demonstrations against the lifting of fuel subsidies in 2019 which turned deadly when huge numbers marched on the capital.

Eyewitness

▼ *Eddie Redmayne is dressed and made up as a clown in preparation for one his appearances as EmCee in Cabaret, during a matinee performance*
PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID LEVENE/THE GUARDIAN



▶ *Ukrainian soldiers take a break in their foxhole as they defend the north-eastern city of Kharkiv the day after Russia's invasion*
JULIAN SIMMONDS





▲ *Boris Johnson and his wife, Carrie, leave Downing Street after his final speech as prime minister on 6 September 2022*
TOLGA AKMEN /EPA



▶ *Matt Walls of England goes flying after a crash in a London qualifier at the start of the Commonwealth Games, held in Birmingham*
ALEX BROADWAY

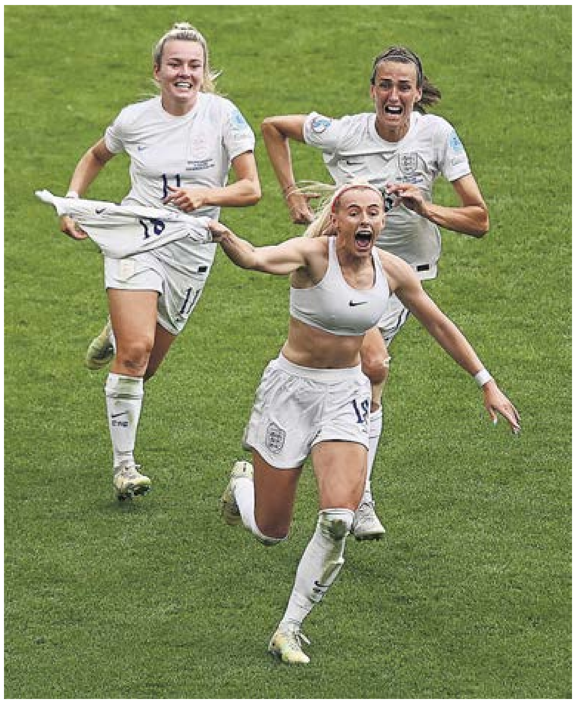


▲ *Riders compete in the Laytown races held on the beach of the Irish town north of Dublin. The festival was twice cancelled due to Covid*
CLODAGH KILCOYNE/REUTERS



South Bank, London

The British Press Photographers' Association's Assignments exhibition is open from tomorrow until 28 May, and features notable moments from the past two years.



▲ *England's Chloe Kelly celebrates after scoring the winning goal at the Women's Euros final against Germany at Wembley in July 2022*

ANDY RAIN/EPA



▲ *Scotland's Eilidh Gorrell on the balance beam in the team event at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham*

HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS





▶ *Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds perform at the All Points East festival, which is held every August at Victoria Park, east London*

ASH KNOTEK/SHUTTERSTOCK

Senior PEN America figure quits in row over Russian dissidents



▲ *Masha Gessen stepped down as vice-president of the literary group*

Peter Beaumont

Masha Gessen, the prominent Russian-American writer who has documented Russia's decline into authoritarianism, has resigned as vice-president of PEN America after it cancelled an event last week with Russian dissidents following objections from Ukrainian participants.

The group, which was founded in 1922 and describes itself as standing "at the intersection of literature and human rights to protect free expression", was plunged into controversy when it acknowledged it had called off an event at a literary festival after Ukrainian writers on a separate panel had threatened to pull out.

A series of furious exchanges followed Gessen's resignation and coverage of it in the US media, including Gessen's claim the Ukrainian position had "blackmailed" PEN America. Gessen was accused of "gaslighting" Ukrainians by focusing on Russians as "victims of tyranny".

The controversy has highlighted the fraught conversation over freedom of expression in the midst of Russia's war against Ukraine. That has spilled over into often heated debate among Ukrainians on social media about distinguishing between "good" and "bad" Russians. .

In a statement released by PEN America on Tuesday, the group admitted it had made "mistakes" and misunderstood a requirement from two Ukrainian participants, Artem Chapeye and Artem Chekh, who are also serving soldiers, that they could not be involved in PEN's World Voices festival if Russian writers were involved in any way.

Gessen was born in Russia but lives in the US and is seen by many as an American writer. However, the presence of others on the panel complicated the issue, with Chapeye telling the Atlantic, which broke the story, he could not make distinctions between "good" and "bad" Russians.

"Until the war ends", he added, a Ukrainian soldier "cannot be seen with the 'good Russians'."

PEN America said in a statement that the events that precipitated Gessen's resignation "began with an error on our part about what would be feasible within the parameters of our annual World Voices Festival of International Literature.

"Working in partnership with PEN Ukraine, we had invited several Ukrainian writers to be part of this year's festival and discuss their experiences as writers and soldiers.

"Separately we had planned an event, to have included Masha, with Russian dissident writers who are now living in New York on the theme of writing in exile from tyranny.

"The Ukrainian writers informed us in advance that they could participate with us as long as no Russians were part of the 'event'. We mistakenly took that to mean their panel, not the entire festival."

On arriving in New York, the Ukrainians discovered the separate panel involving Gessen, and said they could not be involved, even as PEN America tried to reorganise the Russian dissident event to take place outside the auspices of the festival.

After the resignation, Gessen said the issue was not with the sensitivities of Ukrainians fighting a "defensive war" but with PEN's response. Gessen said of the Russian dissidents: "I felt like I was being asked to tell these people that because they're Russians they can't sit at the big table, which felt distasteful."



Banging the drums
Folk dancers in Shaanxi province, China, perform at a welcoming ceremony for the Kazakh president, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, who arrived yesterday for a summit between China and central Asian countries.

PHOTOGRAPH: XINHUA/ SHUTTERSTOCK

Arson inquiry after at least six killed in New Zealand hostel fire

Charlotte Graham-McLay
Wellington

A fire in a 92-room Wellington hostel that claimed at least six lives is being investigated as arson by New Zealand police, who said yesterday that they had opened a homicide inquiry.

Insp Dion Bennett said yesterday that no arrests had been made. He would not say why officers believed the fire on Tuesday had been deliberately started, or whether accelerants had been used.

Bennett said there was still no definitive number of people missing. The current total of those unaccounted for was less than 20, including the six confirmed dead.

Investigators will be looking into a small couch fire reported to have broken out two hours earlier. "As part of our inquiries, we will be seeking to confirm any link between that couch fire and the subsequent fatal fire," Bennett said in an earlier statement.

The fatal fire broke out at 12.25am, prompting dozens of Loafers Lodge residents to flee. Some jumped from windows of the four-storey building, and five were rescued from the roof before the fire was brought under control at about 6am.

Bennett said not everyone who was at the hostel had registered themselves as safe, and urged those who had escaped to contact the police. Some residents left their phones in their rooms when they fled.

Small groups of police officers entered the building for the first time yesterday to begin a scene examination, Bennett said. Entry had not been possible earlier because of safety concerns and the level of contaminants was being monitored, he added.

The hostel, in Newtown, near central Wellington, was occupied by a mixture of short- and long-term tenants, including workers at the nearby hospital.

In brief

United States

Intruder enters home of Biden's security adviser

The US Secret Service is investigating how an apparently intoxicated and confused man walked past agents and into the Washington home of Joe Biden's national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, at about 3am one night in late April.

A report in the Washington Post said the agents outside the house were "unaware that an intruder had gotten inside". Sullivan confronted the intruder but was unharmed. A spokesperson for the Secret Service said that if any deviation from protocol were found, "personnel will be held accountable". Martin Pengelly

China

Comedian's stray dog joke brings £1.68m fine

One of China's leading comedy show companies has been fined £1.68m after a joke by one of its comedians at a standup show in Beijing about stray dogs went viral.

Li Haoshi, known by the stage name House, told how two stray dogs he had adopted chased a squirrel. The phrase that came to mind, he said, was: "Fight well, win the battle" – a punchline based on a slogan associated with the People's Liberation Army.

Li was then suspended from the Shanghai-based Xiaoguo Culture Media firm, which must pay a fine of 13.35m yuan and forfeit 1.35m yuan in "illegal gains". Amy Hawkins

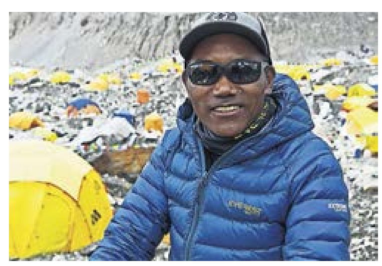
Nepal

Sherpa scales Mount Everest for 27th time

A Nepali sherpa has scaled Mount Everest for a record 27th time, beating his own tally, a government official and his hiking company said.

Kami Rita Sherpa, 53, scaled the 8,849-metre (29,032ft) mountain early yesterday along the traditional south-east ridge route, guiding a foreign climber. Thaneswar Guragai, manager of the sherpa's employer, Seven Summit Treks, said the pair had reached the summit at 8.30am local time.

Kami Rita first scaled Everest in 1994 and has climbed it almost every year since then, except in 2014, 2015 and 2020, when climbs were halted. Reuters *Kathmandu*



Sarkozy must wear electronic tag after appeal against corruption verdict fails



▲ *The former French leader Nicolas Sarkozy was convicted of corruption*

Angelique Chrisafis *Paris*
Agencies

A French appeals court has upheld a prison sentence against the former president Nicolas Sarkozy for corruption and influence-peddling - maintaining that he should serve one year's detention at home with an electronic bracelet.

Sarkozy was originally convicted in 2021 of trying to bribe a magistrate in exchange for information about a legal case in which he was implicated.

It was the first time in modern French history that a former president was sentenced to prison for corruption. He had appealed against the verdict.

Sarkozy, 68, a rightwinger who was president from 2007 to 2012 and remains an influential figure, denies wrongdoing and his lawyers said he would challenge the ruling at France's highest court.

"Nicolas Sarkozy is innocent," said his lawyer Jacqueline Laffont. "We will take this all the way. We are just at the beginning of the process."

Sarkozy's full sentence was three years in prison, which includes two years suspended and one year that could be served at home with an electronic bracelet. He was also banned from public office for three years.

If Sarkozy does challenge the verdict in the country's highest court, the court of cassation, any potential sentence would not begin until that court has ruled.

The case had centred around allegations that Sarkozy and his lawyer Thierry Herzog had formed a "corruption pact" with a judge to obtain and share information about a legal investigation.

The trial came after investigators wiretapped Sarkozy's two official phone lines, and discovered he also had a third unofficial phone line installed in 2014 under the name "Paul Bismuth", through which he communicated with Herzog. The contents of these phone calls led to the 2021 corruption verdict.

On the first day of the appeal hearing in December last year, Sarkozy said he had "never corrupted anybody".

The case is one of many legal investigations that have hung over Sarkozy since he left office.

He will be retried on appeal from November 2023 in the so-called Bygmalion case, in which he was at first sentenced to one year in prison. In that case, the prosecution accused Sarkozy's team of spending nearly double the legal limit on his lavish 2012 re-election campaign, using false billing from a public relations firm called Bygmalion. He has denied any wrongdoing.

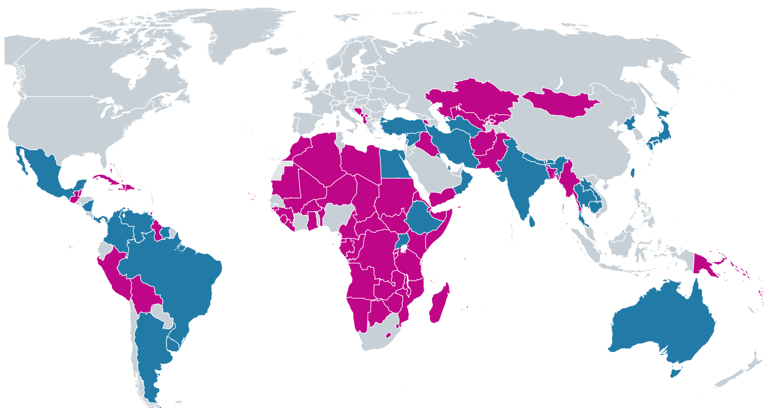
Last week, French prosecutors demanded Sarkozy face trial over alleged Libyan financing of his 2007 presidential election campaign.

Financial crimes prosecutors said Sarkozy and 12 others should face trial over allegations they sought millions of euros in financing from the regime of the then Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, for the campaign.

Sarkozy denies all the charges. Investigating judges have not yet ruled whether a trial will go ahead.

Vaping regulations around the world

● Banned ● Regulated/age restricted ● Unregulated



Source: Global State of Tobacco Harm Reduction

Smoke alarm Regulators around the world take tough action on vaping



▲ *Demonstrators in Mexico protest against the government ban on the sale of vaping products last year*
PHOTOGRAPH: EDGARD GARRIDO/REUTERS

Michael Safi

The vaping industry turns 20 this year, but Ira Simeonidis fears the golden age of e-cigarettes is already wafting away. "It's a bit destroyed," says the organiser of Hall of Vape, Europe's largest vaping trade fair, held in Stuttgart earlier this month.

His festival once drew more than 20,000 visitors, who attended talks, partied with DJs and browsed rows of exhibits by designers showing off their latest "mods" - elaborately crafted devices for inhaling nicotine and other substances of choice. "It was for professional and passionate vapers," Simeonidis says. "A community thing, to get together, drink beer, vape and see each other once a year."

But no more. While the festival was suspended for two years during the pandemic, the vaping world was transformed. Markets around the world have been flooded with mass-produced disposable vapes, and a product that was once the province of speciality stores now fills the racks of corner shops.

The number of designers at his fair more than halved this year, Simeonidis says, and many of his stalls were taken up by companies selling disposable technology. "They're cheaper and it's catastrophic for the environment with their lithium batteries," he says. "Also, there are the kids."

The rise of disposables has not only upset purists. It has intensified the focus of regulators around the world on what they fear is an explosion of vaping among young people, including schoolchildren, enticed by marketing from social media influencers and child-friendly flavours such as creme brulee and sour sherbet.

Even as debate continues over whether vapes are a lifesaving tool to wean smokers off cigarettes, or a way for the nicotine industry to hook a new generation of addicts - and they may be both - concern over teenage use and the environmental toll of the devices is driving a global wave of regulation.

Australia has announced it will impose the strongest restrictions of any developed-world market, completely banning recreational vaping while limiting the sale of the devices to pharmacies - and only with a doctor's prescription.

Other countries are unlikely to go that far, says Freddie Dawson at Tamarind Intelligence, which tracks the industry, but many are tightening their own regimes. The Netherlands banned flavoured vapes this year, while France says it could prohibit disposable vapes by the end of 2023. New Zealand has implemented a world-first generational smoking ban, preventing anyone currently aged 14 and under from legally buying cigarettes for the rest of their lives.

Estimates of the number of people who vape globally vary wildly, from 40m to more than 80m, with the majority thought to be in richer countries where, even with the imposition of new duties, vaping is still cheaper than smoking cigarettes. But as the price has fallen, the devices have proliferated in less wealthy countries such as South Africa and Malaysia, where regulation is nascent and legislators are starting to voice similar worries over their use by adolescents.

> *'Disposables are catastrophic for the environment with their batteries'*
>
> **Ira Simeonidis**
> *Hall of Vape trade fair*

India was four years ahead of Australia in banning vapes outright. In China, where most of the world's vapes are manufactured, flavours other than tobacco were banned in 2022, in recognition of their apparent danger to children - though exporting flavoured products to the rest of the world is still permitted, and booming.

Governments are likely to face challenges as they try to stop vapes getting into the hands of young people. Ban specific flavours, for example, and manufacturers may tweak their recipes to circumvent the rules. Prohibit vapes completely, and the black market is likely to live on.

Enthusiasts may believe the golden age is over. But the vaping era, with all the questions it poses, is only beginning.

Additional reporting **Tess McClure**

▼ *Palestinian children in the village of Jalud show off farm produce. The area is fertile but prone to drought*
PHOTOGRAPH: OFIR BERMAN/THE GUARDIAN



Parched earth How Israel weaponises water to control the occupied West Bank

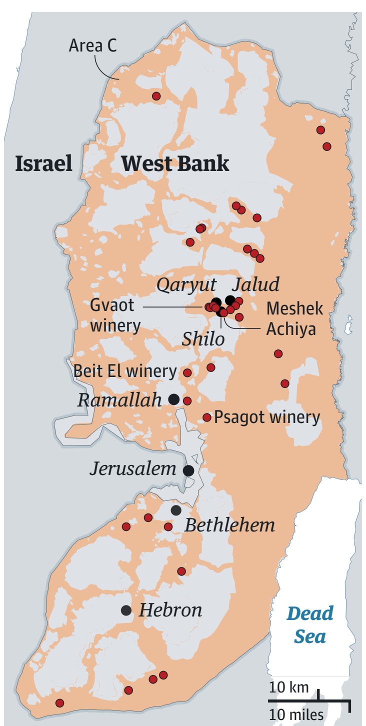
Bethan McKernan
West Bank

Mahmoud Haj Mohammed stands on the roof of his family's home in the occupied West Bank village of Jalud and points towards a clump of cypress trees on the opposite side of the valley.

He has just got back from his job at a concrete factory in the nearby city of Nablus, hot and tired in the last week of Ramadan, jeans covered in grey flecks of cement. The 32-year-old began working there two years ago, after the seizure of a key part of his family's land by Israeli settlers made it unviable for farming.

"It's easy to see where the settlers are. Look at the olive grove below the cypress," Haj Mohammed said. "That is our land, but we are not farming it. See how close together the trees are? That's because the settlers have access to the water supply and proper irrigation. Compare it to our trees, the ones that are spaced out more, and not in neat rows."

Israeli farms and vineyards in the West Bank that are connected to the Israeli water supply



Source: Kerem Navot. Settlement business enterprise locations, Oct 2022. List is not exhaustive as some are yet to be verified and new ones appear regularly

Water is one of the most precious resources in Israel and the Palestinian territories. This beautiful landscape can be harsh and unforgiving. But with enough water, as the Book of Isaiah says, "the desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom".

Israel is the world leader in water management and technology: last year, a first-of-its-kind project began pumping desalinated seawater from the Mediterranean northwards, to replenish the shrinking Sea of Galilee.

Yet rights groups contend that these successes are to the detriment of the Palestinians. Israel controls about 80% of water reserves in the West Bank, but both the West Bank and Gaza Strip face severe water stress and drought.

In theory, no one living or working in Area C, the 60% of the West Bank fully controlled by Israel, can get connected to pipelines belonging to Israel's national water company without proving ownership of the land or otherwise gaining a permit from the Israeli civil administration in the territories, known as Cogat. But in practice, access to water resources is a potent state-controlled weapon for the settlement movement, allowing Israeli-owned vineyards, olive groves, livestock farms and date plantations to flourish.

Israelis, including those living in settlements, use three times as much water a day as West Bank Palestinians do, according to a new report from the Israeli human rights NGO B'Tselem. In many places, it is difficult for Palestinian farmers to cultivate even low yields of crops such as wheat, lentils and chickpeas. Decreasing access to land and water thanks to settlement expansion means farming contributes just 2.6% of the territory's GDP today.

About 450,000 Israelis have settled in what is now Area C since the occupation began in 1967. Overall, their presence is viewed by the international community as illegal, and a leading obstacle to peace. Settler violence against Palestinians is growing.

Some settlers have become rich by cultivating thousands of acres of disputed land. One of the biggest settlement agricultural businesses today is Meshek Achiya, founded in 2003 near Shilo, an area notorious for land grabs and settler violence.

Local families say Meshek Achiya grew after seizing swathes of their land during the *intifada* of the 2000s, when access for Palestinians in the area was blocked by army checkpoints. The Guardian's attempts to reach Meshek Achiya's directors went unanswered. The firm has claimed its land was bought from other settlers.

"If we had more water, the village would grow more than beans and za'atar. But sometimes in the summer we don't even have drinking water," said Jamal Deeb, a resident of Qaryut, the next village to Jalud, where land claimed by several local families has also been taken over by Meshek Achiya.

Meshek Achiya's success - and that of many other Israeli settlement enterprises - would be impossible without access to increasingly large amounts of water that farmers need in the drought-prone area. Yet even though there are five eviction orders pending on some of the land controlled by the company, upheld by Israel's supreme court, the entire operation still appears to be connected to the Israeli water agency's supply.

Meanwhile, the UN says that more than 270 water and sewage facilities used by Palestinians in Area C have been demolished in the past five years on the grounds that the infrastructure is illegal.

Cogat said in emailed comments that "allocation of water to Israeli agriculture in [the West Bank] is performed only after a thorough examination of the various aspects touching on land rights. When water is illegally diverted, the authorities take action in the area as they are legally entitled to do."

The water authority directed requests for information to Cogat.

After 15 years of litigation, the Haj Mohammed family managed to win back seven hectares (17 acres) - about a fifth of the land they claim - in a high court ruling in 2021. In February this year, Meshek Achiya's olive trees were uprooted and moved, and Mahmoud and his brothers planted wheat for the first time in decades in honour of their father. Haj Mohammed senior died in 2017; he never saw any of the family's land returned.

"A lot of people in our village decided to leave. I am doing this for my father, but also for my children," Mahmoud said.

Settlement funding
New York considers ban

New York's state assembly is to consider legislation to stop registered charities from sending tens of millions of dollars a year to fund illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The state assembly member Zohran Mamdani has introduced the "Not on our dime!: ending New York funding of Israeli settler violence" act to prohibit tax-deductible donations from being used to expel Palestinians from their land and other activities widely regarded as war crimes under the Geneva conventions.

Mamdani said: "What we have is a number of New York state-registered charities sending at least $60m [£50m] a year to Israeli settlement organisations, which then use that funding to continue the history of expulsion and dispossession of Palestinians in the occupied territories."

The bill was denounced by some other members of the legislature, who characterised it as an attack on care for victims of terrorism.

"The bill is a ploy to demonise Jewish charities with connection to Israel," they said in a statement.
Chris McGreal

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
-27.85	-14.59	+376.57	+250.60	1.1521	1.2467
7723.23	4210.17	33388.71	30093.59	+0.0022	-0.0029

Business

Purplebricks sale to rival for £1 puts 750 jobs under threat

Mark Sweney

Purplebricks, the online estate agent that reached a peak valuation of more than £1.3bn, has been sold to Charles Dunstone-backed rival Strike for £1, with all of its more than 750 staff put at risk of redundancy.

The company, which had threatened to shake up the property market with its low-cost model, put itself up for sale in February after issuing a string of profit warnings that resulted in its market value plunging to just £30m.

Shares in Purplebricks plunged more than 40% yesterday, giving the company a market capitalisation of just over £2m, as the fire sale all but wiped out shareholders.

As part of the deal, Strike intends a cost-cutting drive that includes "reducing the employee base". "Strike has indicated it would like to initiate a redundancy consultation process that would likely involve all of the company's employees as soon as practicable and possibly prior to completion [of the deal]," Purplebricks said.

"Strike has however assured the board that its firm intention is to grow the business, which will require continued employee support and that any employees affected by redundancy will be treated fairly and equitably."

The company's board said all of the advanced talks held with potential suitors involved "some proposals to reduce or otherwise change the company's workforce".

Purplebricks admitted it was "disappointed" with the value of the deal, which would result in Strike assuming most of its liabilities. Under the deal, Purplebricks will use about £5.5m in cash it has on its balance sheet to pay expenses and costs not covered by Strike, leaving shareholders about £2m.

"I am disappointed with the financial value outcome, both as a 5% shareholder myself and for shareholders who have supported the company," the Purplebricks chair, Paul Pindar, said. "However, there was no other proposal or offer which provided a better return for shareholders, with the same certainty of funding and speed of delivery necessary to provide the stability the company needs."



£2m

The market capitalisation figure for Purplebricks yesterday after a 40% plunge in its shares

The company's five biggest shareholders are the German publisher Axel Springer (26.5%), JNE Partners (11%), Momentum Global Investment Management (7%), Pindar (5%) and Hargreaves Lansdown Asset Management (5%).

Dunstone, who founded businesses including Carphone Warehouse and TalkTalk, said that the deal represented a "positive outcome" for homebuyers and sellers.

The strategic review of Purplebricks began in February, reportedly sparked interest from the company's co-founder, Michael Bruce.

Helena Marston, the chief executive of Purplebricks, said the deal had allowed the company to secure a "solvent outcome" that also "preserves" its consumer brand name in the market. She will resign after completion of the deal.

Dunstone said: "Purplebricks has dramatically changed the industry by driving down the cost of estate agency [fees] and we aim to combine its significant brand recognition with an even more disruptive model.

"In bringing together the two brands, we will supercharge Strike's mission to democratise house selling by empowering customers."

Children outdo inflation - and their parents - with 11% rise in pocket money

Rupert Jones

While millions of parents are battling for pay rises that keep up with the cost of living, Britain's children have seen their average annual "income" increase by 11%, outpacing inflation, according to new data.

The figures on children's pocket money and earnings - part of what was claimed to be the most in-depth study of the UK's "youth economy" - also found that six-year-olds had enjoyed the biggest "pay rise", in the form of a 34% annual increase.

Meanwhile, average earnings from babysitting leapt 24% in a year to top £20, while some savvy children were able to prise cash out of their parents for "jobs" such as making someone a coffee or smiling for a family photo.

The data was based on the finances of more than 125,000 children and was collected from user activity on the NatWest Rooster Money pocket money app and prepaid debit card.

The study - based on data collected between 1 March 2022 and 28 February- suggests British kids have fared a lot better financially than many adults. The headline finding was that average income increased by 11% to £333.84 a year, or £6.42 a week - outpacing consumer price index inflation, which was 10.4% for the same period.

This was despite pocket money routines becoming far less consistent, with only 57% of children receiving a regular allowance - down from 65% in 2021-22.

Instead of committing to a fixed regular sum, parents have been leaning towards one-off payments, using special occasions and good behaviour as opportunities for extra generosity.

At the same time, the study authors said entrepreneurial youngsters were increasingly finding new ways to ensure a steady stream of income. Revenues from reselling possessions such as clothes increased by 6%, and tutoring benefited from a huge premium, with average earnings for each job soaring 102% to £16.95.



▲ *Breaking the bank: six-year-olds enjoyed the biggest 'pay rise' at 34%*

JD Sports on track for £1bn profits as trend for trainers runs and runs

Sarah Butler

JD Sports said yesterday it was on track to hit £1bn of profits this year as it steps up expansion in the US and Europe in a bet that the trend for trainers and sports leisurewear will roll on.

Régis Schultz, the retail group's chief executive who took over last summer, said JD's young shoppers had more opportunity to get work and "whenever they get a job they can buy the gear they love".

He said that once people had made the shift to wearing sports shoes they did not want to move back to less comfortable footwear, and so he expected the trend to continue.

Schultz's comments came as JD reported an 18% rise in sales to £10.1bn, while underlying profits rose 4.6% to £991.4m in the year to the end of January.

He said half the 12% sales rise at the group's sports chains in the UK was the result of inflation and half because of additional sales. The retailer said it expected inflation to ease in the second half of the year as transport and energy costs declined.

Pre-tax profits for the group, however, slumped by almost a third to £440.9m as JD wrote down the value of acquired brands including Wheelbase, Wellgosh, Gym King and Bodytone. It took a hit from the sale of the Footasylum chain and a group of brands sold to Mike Ashley's Frasers Group, including Liam Gallagher's Pretty Green and the 1980s brand Tessuti. A withdrawal from South Korea also hit profits.

Schultz said JD expected to top £1bn of profits this financial year as it stepped up expansion in the US to add up to 600 stores over the next five years. The group has 138 JD outlets in North America including 10 in Canada, up from 89 a year ago.

Schultz said the group was looking at acquisitions in Europe and Latin America to reach new markets and wanted to expand the JD brands into areas such as gaming and music.

In the UK, JD aims to expand by enlarging existing stores so it can sell more fashion alongside footwear.

Schultz added that the business had benefited from having physical stores alongside a website, which protected the group from the decline in sales seen at Boohoo and Asos - online retailers that are reliant on home deliveries and whose sales have declined as consumers fretted over shipping costs.



▲ *A shopworker laces up trainers at the JD Sports store in Oxford Street*

PHOTOGRAPH: LUKE MACGREGOR/ BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES

Business view
Nils Pratley



Stellantis probably isn't blameless, but UK needs to switch on to the car crisis

Has Stellantis, owner of Vauxhall, sounded the death knell for the (already shrunken) volume end of the UK car industry? Does the group's warning that it could shut its UK operations unless post-Brexit trading rules are renegotiated represent an existential threat to the sector, as some say?

Well, it obviously isn't possible to put a positive spin on Stellantis's submission to the business select committee. It is less than two years since the firm, which also produces Peugeot, Citroën and Fiat vehicles, announced a £100m investment into light electric vans in Ellesmere Port, complete with government backing. So the threat is to perform an almighty U-turn, which, unfortunately, could be credible from a practical perspective. The group has alternative places to produce electric vans, notably in Portugal.

Yet there are three points of context to make here – and two suggest warnings of wider Armageddon may be slightly premature. First, while the "rules of origin" requirements – which dictate the content by value of a vehicle that must be sourced in the UK or EU – are a headache for all big carmakers during the electric transition, not everyone is issuing threats as loudly as Stellantis.

Tata-owned Jaguar Land Rover said as recently as last week that its UK factories are safe even if it chooses to source electric car batteries from Spain. In Sunderland, Nissan has a dedicated battery supplier – Chinese group Envision – next door, so should have no difficulty in meeting the 45% by 2024 demand.

Toyota's electric plans for the UK are currently mysterious, but one has to ask if the deep problem for Stellantis, which knew about the 2024 deadline when it made its 2021 announcement on Ellesmere Port, is that it planned to source batteries initially from China. When the cost of raw materials for those batteries increased after the invasion of Ukraine, perhaps it was tipped on to the wrong side of the 45% threshold that implies 10% tariffs on exports to the EU.

If so, one has to wonder if the group built enough slack into its arithmetic. May 2023, after all, is late in the day to complain about a measure due in January 2024.

Second, there's a decent chance that Stellantis will be granted its wish that the UK and EU agree to extend the current 40% threshold until 2027. There is incentive for the EU to do so because some EU-based carmakers could be caught by 10% tariffs on their exports to the UK. That is because the EU is also behind the curve in building electric battery plants.

Note that Ford, highlighting its £1.6bn investment in a plant in Cologne, immediately backed the appeal for an extension. Battery supply chains across Europe, it argued, are not sufficiently developed to meet consumer demand.

"Tariffs will hit both UK- and EU-based manufacturers, so it is vital that the UK and EU come to the table to agree a solution," it said.



▲ *The Nissan production line in Sunderland, where the car company has a battery supplier next door*

> *It would be perverse if a chunk of electric vehicles end up with tariffs as they cross the Channel, but petrol and diesel cars do not*

It's a strong argument. It would be perverse if a chunk of electric vehicles end up with tariffs as they cross the Channel, but petrol and diesel cars do not.

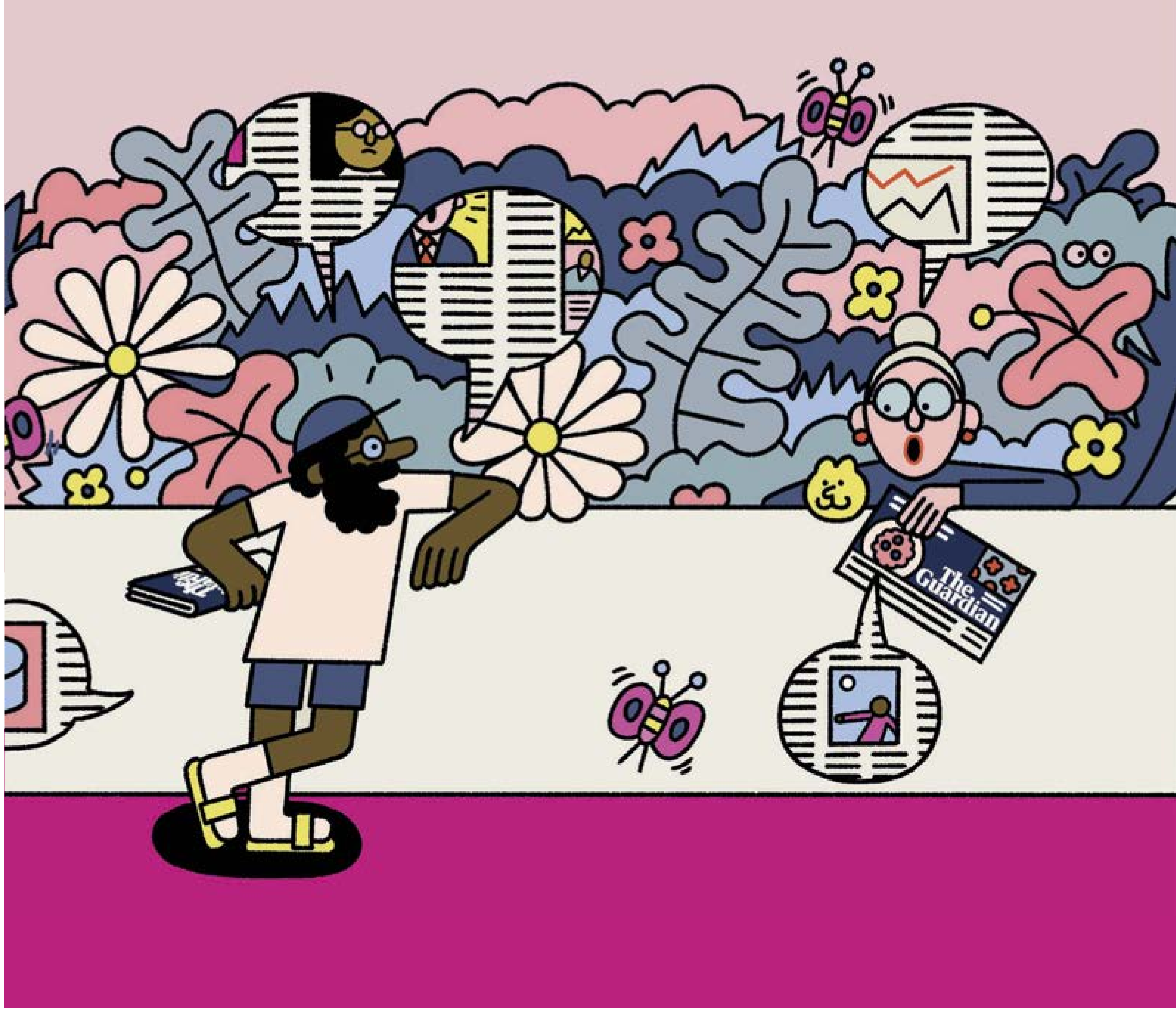
But Ford is not the voice of all firms producing in the EU. Some EU-based rivals may have organised their supply chains to meet the 2024 deadline (plus the planned increase to 55% EU-UK content in 2027) and be less enthusiastic about an 11th-hour rule change. But the lobby for delay is clearly growing, with even JLR talking about "unrealistic and counterproductive" deadlines. A political fudge feels a reasonable bet.

And the third contextual point? That one is less reassuring for the UK: gigafactory development here is miles off the pace, and politicians wasted years being bewitched by the losing bet that was Britishvolt. Even if the 2024 deadline goes, the UK still needs an industrial strategy worthy of the name – and the cost of energy for industrial production seems as serious as the underpowered battery supply chain.

Consider Stellantis's troubles, even with its company-specific nuances, yet another wake-up call.

The government needs a serious policy if it wants to run in the electric race.

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▶ *The proposals to reduce daytime waiting staff's hours are due to be implemented this week*
PHOTOGRAPH: MARK WAUGH/ALAMY

5
Number of hours a day a waiter could lose, with their duties being performed by managers

400
Number of staff affected by the proposals across 90 of the pizza chain's restaurants

Protest as Pizza Express cuts hours for hundreds of waiters

Sarah Butler

Pizza Express is facing a rebellion from employees after announcing it would cut hours for hundreds of waiting staff before 5pm and hand their duties over to restaurant managers.

The changes, due to be implemented this week, will mean a reduction in pay for as many as 400 hourly paid waiting staff in up to 90 of the group's 360 restaurants, while salaried managers will get added workload for no extra pay.

Managers also do not get a share of the service charge paid by customers, so staff are also questioning what will happen to those payments when no waiters are on duty.

The Unite union, which represents some of the chain's 10,000 workers, said waiting staff in affected restaurants could lose up to five hours' work a day – a cut of £260 a week for those aged at least 23,on the minimum wage and working five days a week.

One member of staff, a working mother to whom daytime shifts were important, said she was losing two-thirds of her hours – or about 12 hours a week, which is equivalent to £125 a week at the minimum wage – plus up to £150 of tips.

She said the changes had created an "impossible situation" for workers. "It will ruin my life, as my income will fall dramatically."

Another worker said they could lose up to 18 hours – equivalent to £193 a week – plus at least £30 in tips.

In a post on Pizza Express's internal staff messaging system, Slice, seen by the Guardian, one manager wrote: "Nobody asked the managers if we wanted to take the extra job load as we already have so much to do, and now they want us to do more without even asking us if we are OK with it."

Pizza Express has told staff in official messages seen by the Guardian that the changes to "minimum staffing" rules were intended to "ensure we hit budget". "We are resetting how we use our labour system to ensure we always have the right people, in the right place at the right time to hit our budget," the company said.

> *'The impact this will have on workers who need these lunchtime hours is catastrophic'*
>
> **Bryan Simpson**
> *Unite union*

Bryan Simpson, the lead organiser at Unite's hospitality division, said Pizza Express's chief executive, Paula MacKenzie, had been forced to call an emergency meeting with managers yesterday as a result of the "backlash from all levels of the workforce."

"To impose a labour management system which may see thousands of waiters lose hundreds of hours without proper consultation is a moral outrage," Simpson said.

"The impact this will have on the most financially insecure part-time workers, who need these lunchtime hours to fit around school and childcare, is catastrophic."

A spokesperson for Pizza Express said: "Customer habits are always changing, and we have to adapt to that … Across less than a quarter of our restaurants, we are tweaking the shift patterns of a very small number of our team members on the early-week daytime shift. We will work with our team members to find other shifts, pick up hours at nearby restaurants or, for those with fixed patterns, honour their current hours if they're unable to change these."

Small firms could get thousands from insurers after Covid ruling

Daniel Boffey
Chief reporter

Hundreds of thousands of small businesses that claimed on their insurance during the Covid pandemic but had their payouts delayed could be owed thousands of pounds after a ruling by the Financial Ombudsman Service.

In what campaigners say is a key test case, the complaints body has ruled that a dental practice whose claim was declined but later approved should be paid interest by QBE, one of the largest insurers in the world.

The ombudsman has ruled that 8% annual interest should be paid on the sum over the period between the claim being declined and being paid, potentially allowing many more businesses to make similar claims.

About 370,000 small businesses, from restaurants and bars to hairdressers and guesthouses, made claims to a total value of about £1.2bn after the coronavirus lockdowns left them unable to trade.

Many of those policyholders – including the former footballer Gary Neville, who co-owns two hotels with his former Manchester United teammate Ryan Giggs – had their claims initially declined on the grounds that the business interruption policies were not designed to cover a government-imposed lockdown.

In 2020, the high court found in favour of policyholders after the Financial Conduct Authority brought a test case, but six of the eight insurers named in the case – Arch Insurance, Argenta, Hiscox, MS Amlin, QBE and RSA – appealed. It was not until the supreme court ruled in the policyholders' favour in 2021 that the claims were paid out. The dental practice, in Cornwall, made its claim against QBE with the support of Salmon Assessors.

Jeff Salmon, the chief executive of the loss assessor, said: "It's important to stress that this additional payment only applies to policyholders who made successful business interruption claims."

The dental practice made its initial claim in April 2020 but only received a payout and £250 in compensation in late 2021.

QBE said: "We have complied with the ruling of the ombudsman for this individual complaint and consider this matter closed."

UBS to make $35bn in Credit Suisse takeover – but will also take $17bn hit

Mark Sweney

UBS is in line to make an almost $35bn (£28bn) gain after its emergency takeover of Credit Suisse – but has said it will take a $17bn hit from costs related to the rushed rescue deal.

The Swiss lender has said it will make gains of $34.8bn after taking on Credit Suisse, based on an initial assessment of data until the end of last year, according to a regulatory filing. The accounting gain will be one of the biggest ever reported by a bank in a single quarter.

However, UBS is also estimating it will incur almost $4bn in costs related to litigation, regulatory matters and other liabilities after the takeover of its smaller rival.

UBS is also expecting to take a $13bn hit from asset and liability adjustments in the group, meaning the takeover will cost it $17bn, and the regulatory filing said Credit Suisse faced a number of restrictions around its business until the $3.4bn deal was completed.

A group of Credit Suisse investors who lost bonds worth more than 4.5bn Swiss francs (£4bn) are already suing Switzerland's financial regulator over its decision to wipe out risky bank debt as part of the government-brokered takeover deal in March.

"The extent to which UBS was a reluctant partner in the deal to buy Credit Suisse has become clear," said Susannah Streeter, the head of money and markets at Hargreaves Lansdown. "The Swiss bank has had to absorb a painful loss after being rushed into taking over its beleaguered rival. It is a heavy cost to bear, and has been partly put down to the lack of time it was able to complete due diligence and assess the web of problems at Credit Suisse."

Unlike a standard deal, where parties have months to do due diligence, the Credit Suisse deal was hammered out in 48 hours, with UBS executives pointing out the risks they were taking in integrating the business.

Shares in UBS, which have been under pressure, were flat in early trading in Zurich yesterday.

UBS investors have urged the Swiss lender to avoid sweeping job cuts and inflating executive pay as they raised concerns about the creation of a mega-bank after the takeover.



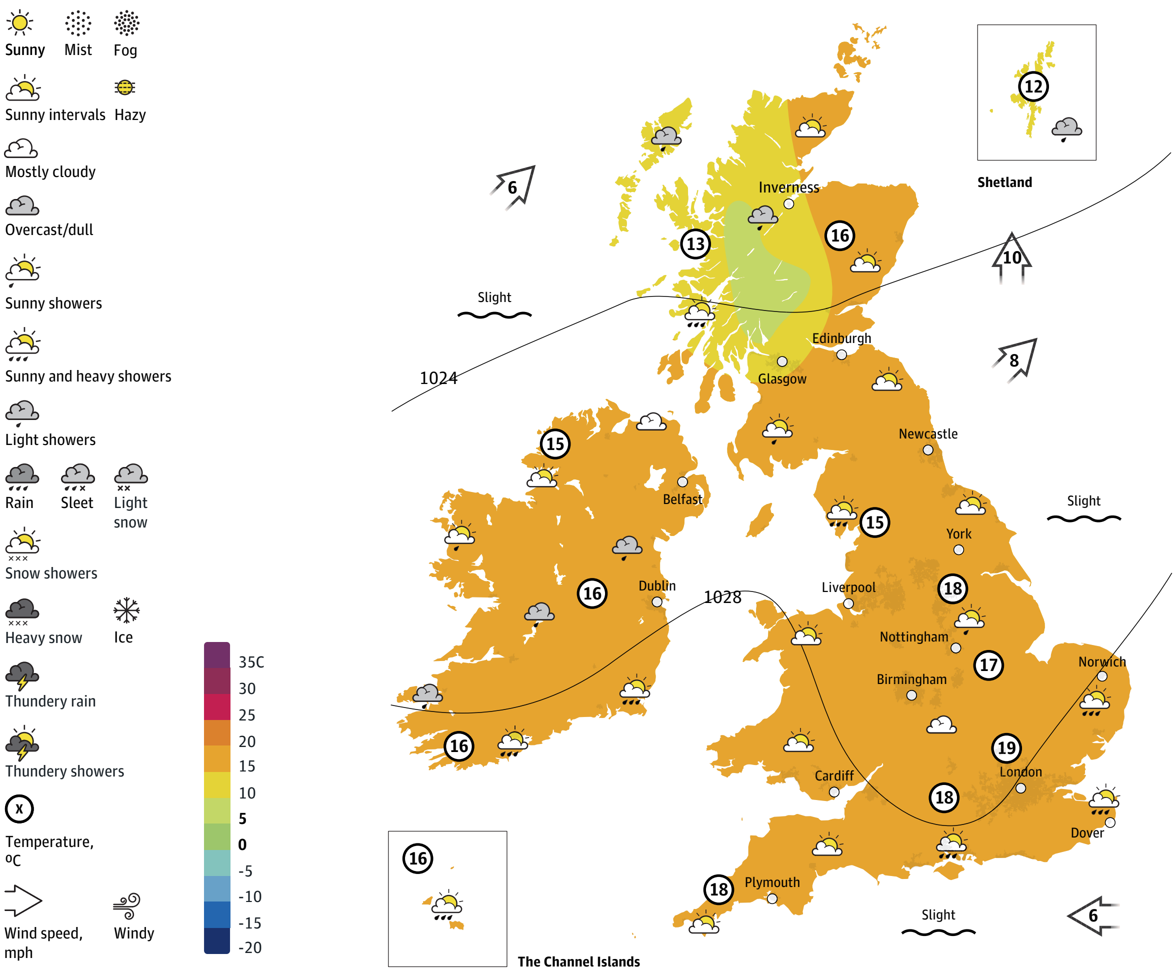
▲ *UBS has been called a 'reluctant partner' in the Credit Suisse rescue*



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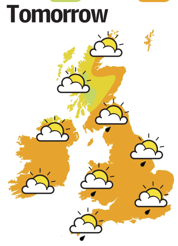
Weather
Thursday 18 May 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

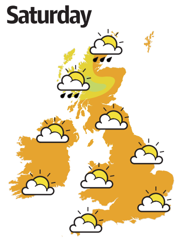


Forecast

Low 10 High 17
Tomorrow



Low 8 High 19
Saturday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

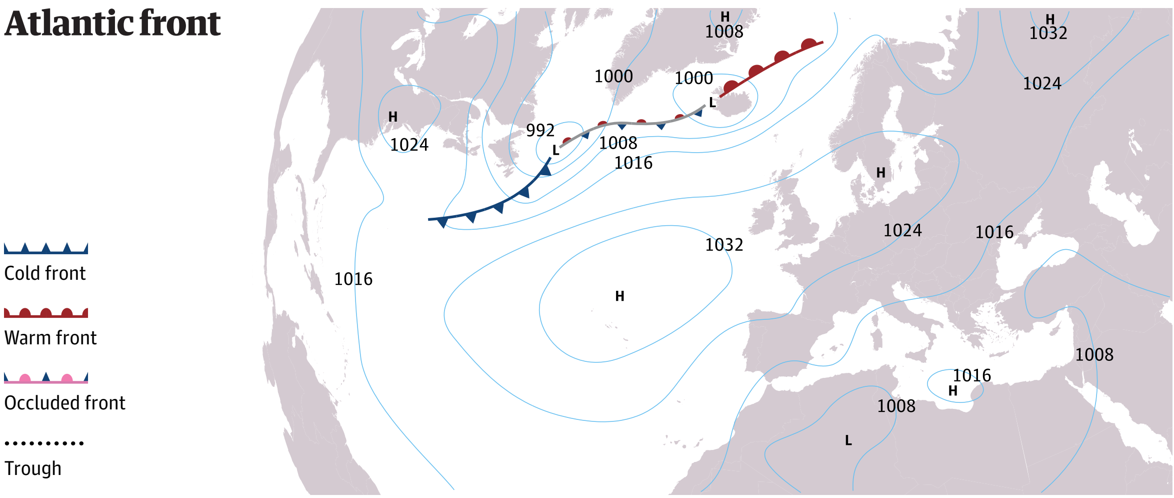
Latest	
15 May 2023	424.27
Weekly average	
07 May 2023	424.29
17 May 2022	420.75
17 May 2013	399.74
Pre-industrial base	280
Safe level	350

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	10 19	80%	Low
Manchester	10 17	25%	Low
Edinburgh	7 16	25%	Low
Belfast	7 15	80%	Low
Birmingham	10 18	25%	Low
Brighton	9 15	80%	Low
Bristol	10 17	20%	Low
Cardiff	10 17	10%	Low
Newcastle	9 17	25%	Low
Penzance	11 15	5%	Low

Atlantic front



Weatherwatch

The British spring is a fickle season. We can experience floods and droughts, snow and rain, heatwaves and cold snaps. So, imagine how the range of weather patterns in spring can affect migrant birds, many of which have made the epic journey from sub-Saharan Africa to be here.

Some years are worse than others. The spring of 1991 was one of the coldest on record, with a damp westerly or cold northerly airflows across the UK for almost all of April and much of May, and a cold, wet and dull June.

In adverse conditions, migrants such as swallows and warblers will often stay on the other side of the Channel, waiting for the situation to change. But doing so has its risks: birds that arrive back later may struggle to find a mate or nest site; and even if they do, they then face a race against time to raise a family.

That year, however, they were right to be cautious. The start of April saw a run of deep depressions bringing high winds and torrential rain, followed by cold Arctic air from mid-April onwards.

Fortunately, a window of better weather at the end of April allowed most migrants to cross the Channel, albeit two or three weeks later than normal. **Stephen Moss**

Around the world

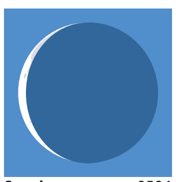
Algiers	17	Lisbon	26
Ams'dam	15	Madrid	22
Athens	23	Malaga	20
Auckland	18	Melb'rne	13
B Aires	21	Mexico C	26
Bangkok	38	Miami	32
Barcelona	19	Milan	21
Basra	40	Mombasa	31
Beijing	27	Moscow	25
Berlin	16	Mumbai	34
Bermuda	24	N Orleans	30
Brussels	15	Nairobi	25
Budapest	14	New Delhi	38
C'hagen	13	New York	17
Cairo	29	Oslo	18
Cape Town	18	Paris	17
Chicago	23	Perth	26
Corfu	22	Prague	15
Dakar	27	Reykjavik	11
Dhaka	31	Rio de J	24
Dublin	16	Rome	21
Florence	20	Shanghai	23
Gibraltar	20	Singapore	32
H Kong	32	Stockh'm	15
Harare	26	Strasb'g	18
Helsinki	13	Sydney	17
Istanbul	17	Tel Aviv	24
Jo'burg	18	Tenerife	25
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	29
K'mandu	26	Toronto	15
Kabul	24	Vancouv'r	22
Kingston	32	Vienna	12
Kolkata	35	Warsaw	14
L Angeles	24	Wash'ton	21
Lagos	31	Well'ton	16
Lima	24	Zurich	15

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	0110	4.0m	1316	4.1m
Avonmouth	0703	12.9m	1926	13.0m
Barrow	1119	9.2m	2345	8.9m
Belfast	1104	3.5m	2328	3.3m
Cobh	0516	4.0m	1738	4.0m
Cromer	0635	4.7m	1833	4.9m
Dover	1116	6.4m	2329	6.6m
Dublin	--	--	1137	4.0m
Galway	0458	4.9m	1719	5.0m
Greenock	0009	3.2m	1224	3.4m
Harwich	1141	4.0m	2354	3.9m
Holyhead	1010	5.5m	2238	5.4m
Hull	0614	7.1m	1816	7.5m
Leith	0219	5.3m	1431	5.4m
Liverpool	1059	9.1m	2326	9.0m
London Bridge	0126	6.8m	1356	6.8m
Lossiemouth	--	--	1138	3.9m
Milford Haven	0602	6.8m	1825	6.7m
Newquay	0455	6.7m	1717	6.6m
North Shields	0316	4.8m	1522	4.9m
Oban	0542	3.8m	1754	3.7m
Penzance	0428	5.3m	1652	5.3m
Plymouth	0534	5.3m	1759	5.3m
Portsmouth	1111	4.5m	2340	4.7m
Southport	1027	8.8m	2301	8.7m
Stornoway	0639	4.6m	1908	4.5m
Weymouth	0557	1.2m	1822	1.2m
Whitby	0350	5.3m	1559	5.4m
Wick	1111	3.3m	2343	3.3m
Workington	1122	8.1m	2346	7.9m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0504
Sun sets	2049
Moon rises	0425
Moon sets	1947
New Moon	19 May

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	2129 to 0513
Birm'ham	2100 to 0506
Brighton	2047 to 0506
Bristol	2100 to 0514
Carlisle	2117 to 0458
Cork	2125 to 0535
Dublin	2123 to 0519
Glasgow	2129 to 0459
Harlech	2112 to 0513
Inverness	2137 to 0447
London	2049 to 0503
M'chester	2107 to 0504
Newcastle	2113 to 0453
Norwich	2049 to 0453
Penzance	2106 to 0531

Sport



Athletics
Kipruto charged and suspended for suspected doping
Page 32 →

Rugby league
Qatar in surprise bid to save 2025 World Cup
Page 32 →



▲ *Marnus Labuschagne, Daryl Mitchell, Steve Smith, Cheteshwar Pujara and Jonny Bairstow (clockwise from top left) have lifted interest in this season's County Championship*
PA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Making memories

County cricket's long-form stories offer something IPL cannot match

Andy Bull



Psst. This bit is between just us, please. It isn't something I'd want to get out in public, especially not when I'm in this line of business, but I need to get it off my chest. I don't much like the Indian Premier League. There, I said it. This, like an acceptance you will never play the Dane, is the sort of self-knowledge you acquire in middle age, but admitting it here exposes me to youthful titters on Twitter, marks me out as the sort of man who probably quite likes gardening, sighs when he settles into a chair, someone who, yes, you may well find at a county ground on a free weekday.

As I type this, Gujarat Titans are playing Sunrisers Hyderabad in what is, let me check, the 62nd game of the season that's been running for 46 days. It looks like a good one as far as they go, Shubman Gill has hit a hundred, Bhuvneshwar Kumar has taken five wickets. It is, presumably, of serious interest to however many hundreds of thousands of cricket fans live in those two cities and everyone else in India and its diaspora who follow the league closely. For many of the rest of us, though, the games in this $10bn league come and go.

I may glance at the headlines, dip into the scorecard, maybe even watch a clip on social media while I'm putting off writing the rest of this sentence. But the truth is that I, a man who has spent the large part of the past 20 years writing about cricket, among other things, and who still makes a living doing it, couldn't tell you who is top of the league without looking (just checked: it turns out I've already mentioned them). The matches pass like leaves from autumn trees.

Some of it is simply because of the format of the sport. We have had 20 years of Twenty20. Looking back, how many indelible memories have they left you with? How many moments were there among them you still think or talk about now? I have a handful, almost all from international matches, the six sixes Yuvraj Singh hit off Stuart Broad, the four Carlos Brathwaite took off Ben Stokes, Misbah-ul-Haq being caught on the sweep, Kevin Pietersen taking on Dale Steyn, Chris Gayle hitting Brett Lee over the grandstand.

So, same question again then, how many of them were from franchise games? This isn't a trick. Yours could very well be longer than mine and that's fine. But I have two. Brendon McCullum's hundred in the very first game of the IPL and Shane Warne calling how he was going to dismiss McCullum in a Big Bash match.

And yet there will be, by a quick count, almost 400 more franchise T20 matches played across 10 major leagues in the rest of 2023, one-and-some for every day of the year, and that's without including the various offshoots, such as the Ten10, or the 6ixty, or the regular T20 fixtures between regular domestic teams. And there are more coming in 2024.

Even the people being paid to play this stuff don't think it is the best form of the sport, just the most lucrative. "Test cricket is still my favourite," Trent Boult told Cricinfo recently, parroting one of the great player cliches of the day.

It sometimes seems like there are only two sorts of people who want more T20 cricket: the large part of the Indian youth market and men making money off them. Even that second group doesn't seem entirely persuaded it's worth it. "It is a difficult one for me because Test cricket is what you grow up on as a fan and I haven't missed the first day at Lord's for however many years, it is still my preferred format," the Rajasthan Royals owner, Manoj Badale, told the BBC's Tailenders podcast the other day.

"But it is not about me, it is about what the 10- to 15-year-olds in India and across the world are thinking."

And here I was thinking the 10-year-old was supposed to be the one who points out the Emperor has no clothes on. I have two boys just a little younger than that. I wouldn't leave them in charge of picking the Sunday afternoon movie, but here we are organising an entire sport around their preferences.

How many indelible memories has T20 cricket left you with? Matches pass by like leaves from autumn trees

Badale has a degree in economics, with a distinction in disingenuous bullshit. His plan for his "preferred format" is that "we should have it at the same time every year, played between a small set of nations that can actually afford it and Lord's becomes like a Wimbledon, an event that is in the diary".

It seems we are going to start organising the Test schedule around the IPL owners' social calendar. The rest of the red-ball cricket around the world doesn't matter, whether that is Tests in Sri Lanka, New Zealand or the West Indies or all the first-class stuff that, you know, actually makes that Test match at Lord's possible.

Odd thing is, there is an opportunity in all this. You may not have noticed, but the County Championship is quietly thriving. It has become a bastion of red-ball cricket, home, at the moment, to some of the world's best batsmen - Marnus Labuschagne, Steve Smith, Cheteshwar Pujara, Daryl Mitchell and Jonny Bairstow - a crop of Test-match standard bowling attacks and a surfeit of interesting plotlines as players prepare for the Test season ahead.

It is the place you go if you want to watch cricket with long-form stories, with blocks and leaves, proper spells and slips, a refuge for the tragically unhip. If you're looking, you'll find me beside the sightscreen.



▲ Zach Johnson seemed dismissive of LIV golfers featuring in his team

Golf

LIV rebels aim to stake claims for Ryder Cup at US PGA

Ewan Murray
Oak Hill

Brooks Koepka and Dustin Johnson want to play in the Ryder Cup. There are influential members of the United States team who want Brooks Koepka and Dustin Johnson to play in the Ryder Cup. Yet speaking on the eve of the US PGA Championship, team captain Zach Johnson was as dismissive of the prospect of LIV rebels boarding September's charter to Rome as someone of his mild disposition could possibly be. LIV golfers appear to be out of sight and out of mind.

Zach Johnson was asked directly whether his namesake, Dustin, is currently among their nation's best 12 golfers. "Really difficult for me to judge that," said the captain. "I don't know the golf courses they're playing. Never seen them. I'm not there on foot in person."

At the Masters last month, Koepka was denied glory by an inspired Jon Rahm and a ruinous final round.

"I haven't really seen where he's at since Augusta," said Zach Johnson of Koepka. "He played really good that one week but it's one week."

Dustin Johnson, a Ryder Cup specialist, took delivery of his second LIV title on Sunday. It would be no surprise if he and Koepka compete over the next four days at Oak Hill. That scenario would make things rather awkward for Zach Johnson.

"It would be awesome to represent the United States," said Koepka. "If I handle my business, everything will take care of itself. If you go second, first, first, first [in majors] it would be kind of tough not to get a pick, right? But it's not up to me. It's up to Zach."

Dustin Johnson has been consistently careful not to antagonise anybody within golf's traditional ecosystem. "I have no idea if I'd get picked," he said of his Ryder Cup prospects. "Obviously if I continue to play really well for the rest of the year, then there's a chance."

As ever in this fractured domain, politics are in play. The PGA of America and PGA Tour – the latter is embroiled in legal battles with LIV – are close allies.

Zach Johnson revealed he will bring his team to Italy for a scouting mission a fortnight before they face Europe. This represented much-needed certainty against a backdrop of unknowns.

Formula One

Imola Grand Prix called off after severe flooding

Giles Richards
Bologna

Formula One drivers and teams have issued their unequivocal support for the decision to cancel this weekend's Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

They have stood squarely by Formula One, the local authorities and the promoter in Imola after they agreed that it was not safe to race because of the risks of flooding caused by severe weather in the Italian region.

F1 was unwilling to potentially add to the burden on the community and emergency services, a sentiment shared by many of the drivers who spoke out in support.

Lewis Hamilton believed F1 had got its priorities right. "Hoping everyone in Emilia-Romagna is able to stay safe and look out for each other right now," the seven times world champion said. "Thoughts are with those affected by this tragedy and the amazing emergency services. I know we all understand that safety comes first. Can't wait to see you all at the next race."

He was supported by the world champion, Max Verstappen. "Our thoughts are with all those affected by the severe rainfall and flooding in the greater Emilia-Romagna region. We wish you all strength to ensure your safety throughout this period," said the Red Bull driver.

Eight people have died as a result of the extreme weather conditions in the Emilia-Romagna region in May, with many people displaced by flooding, forcing hundreds to be evacuated from their homes and subject to emergency relief. Red threat-level warnings of further flooding and landslides had been issued for this week, prompting fears F1 was an additional complication that would only be a burden on resources.

Ferrari's base at Maranello is only 50 miles from the Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari, which is considered a home race for the team, and the Ferrari principal, Fred Vasseur, also expressed his solidarity with the people suffering.

"On behalf of everyone working at Scuderia Ferrari, I would like to express our deepest sympathy to everyone affected by this terrible tragedy," he said. "Emilia-Romagna is our homeland and it's heartbreaking to see what people are going through at the moment." His sentiments were reiterated across the grid by teams unanimously backing the decision.



▲ Wet weather has led to flooding in Italy's Emilia-Romagna region

The British driver George Russell said the decision had been correct. "Sorry for the fans that this weekend's race has been cancelled but the safety of everyone involved always has to come first," he said. "Wishing all the best to everyone in the Emilia-Romagna region and surrounding areas that have been affected by these floods."

The FIA said in a statement on its website: "The decision has been taken because it is not possible to safely hold the event for our fans, the teams and our personnel and it is the right and responsible thing to do given the situation faced by the towns and cities in the region. It would not be right to put further pressure on the local authorities and emergency services at this difficult time."

Stefano Domenicali, the head of Formula One, said: "It is such a tragedy to see what has happened to Imola and Emilia-Romagna, the town and region that I grew up in, and my thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the flooding and the families and communities affected."

The decision came after Italy's deputy prime minister, Matteo Salvini, called for the race to be postponed. Salvini, who is also Italy's transport minister, said in a statement it was "imperative to concentrate all efforts on coping with the emergency", including avoiding a traffic overload in the area. "Let's dedicate ourselves to relief efforts," he said.

That came after Formula One and the authorities in Imola told teams and personnel not to attend the circuit. On Tuesday the F1 paddock at the Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari was evacuated as a precaution because of the risk of flooding from the adjacent Santerno river, which runs within metres of the paddock. Elsewhere in Italy, adverse weather conditions have affected cycling's Giro d'Italia as well as interrupting play at the Italian Open tennis tournament in Rome.

The race in Imola had been due to open F1's first triple header of the season, with races to follow on consecutive weekends in Monaco and Spain. Due to complexities of the sport's packed schedule, at this stage it is not thought it will be possible to reschedule the race for later in the year, dropping the number of races from a record 23 to 22.



TIM DE WAELE/GETTY IMAGES

Calm before the storm The peloton moved serenely out of Camaiore (pictured) for stage 11 of the Giro d'Italia but on a crash-strewn day Tao Geoghegan Hart was forced out of the race after suffering a hip fracture in a fall. The Ineos Grenadiers rider will require surgery, the team said last night in a statement. Hart's teammate Geraint Thomas also hit the deck but managed to continue, as did Primoz Roglic. Pascal Ackermann sprinted to the stage win.

Tennis

Flat Djokovic suffers Rome defeat by Rune

Holger Rune sent an off-colour Novak Djokovic tumbling out of the Italian Open yesterday, the young Dane prevailing 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 in an epic battle against the defending champion to secure his place in the semi-finals. For the first time since 2004, neither Djokovic nor the injured Rafael Nadal will be in the Rome final.

Rune outlasted Djokovic in three sets in last year's Paris Masters final and the 20-year-old again got the better of the Serbian world No 1. "It's really a big win for me," Rune said. "Obviously, I did it last year in Paris, but every match is a huge challenge when I play Novak.

"He's one of the greatest to ever play the game, so I knew I had to be at my best. I'm super proud of myself and I enjoyed every moment out there."

Djokovic will relinquish the top ranking to Spain's Carlos Alcaraz before the French Open, where the Serb will look to claim a men's record 23rd grand slam title having gone level with Nadal by winning the Australian Open.

In the women's draw the No 20 seed, Jelena Ostapenko, proved too strong for Paula Badosa, the Latvian going through to the semi-finals after a 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 win.

Meanwhile, Andy Murray fell to a 6-3, 6-0 defeat against Stan Wawrinka in the second round of the Challenger event in Bordeaux. **Reuters**

Cricket

Bairstow hit 'dark times' after injury but feels for Foakes

Ali Martin

Jonny Bairstow feared he might not be able to walk again but - newly fit after last year's horrific leg break and restored to the role of Test wicketkeeper - the Yorkshireman fancies the good times can roll once more come the Ashes.

That Bairstow would return to England's side once fit was scarcely in question given his explosive role in last summer's surging performances, those four centuries in five innings helping to usher in the new era. Still, displacing Ben Foakes behind the stumps for the Ireland Test has certainly caught the eye.

Oblivious to much of the swirling debate around this selection call, Bairstow is simply content at having battled back from the broken leg and ankle dislocation that came from last summer's freak slip on the golf course, plus the bleak period that followed.

"I was buzzing," said Bairstow, when asked about the call from England's head coach, Brendon McCullum. "There were some dark times last winter, so to get that phone call after all the emotions you go through, there's a huge amount of pride. It was awesome. There's naturally been a few [low moments]. You wonder whether or not you'll be able to walk again, jog again, run again, play cricket again. Absolutely, those things do go through your mind."

Bairstow, speaking at an event to promote England partners Radox, said he has not had contact with Foakes since the squad was named, but will in time.

> *'You wonder if you will walk again, play cricket again'*
>
> **Jonny Bairstow**
> *England wicketkeeper*

Given an on-off relationship with the gloves himself, keeping in 49 of his 89 Tests but just once since 2019, he knows how the Surrey man feels.

"I've also been in that situation so I can absolutely feel for him," Bairstow said. "But that's also the nature of sport - it's not me that's made those decisions. He's been a big part of the last 12 months for England and there's no doubt he'll be back playing at some point. It's one of those unfortunate things that happen in professional sport."

Of the polarised reaction online, Bairstow added: "I deleted Twitter off my phone a while back. I had it during the winter because I was injured but as soon as I was close to playing I deleted it again because I need to concentrate on what I need to do.

"We're very lucky to have some amazing fans in this country and people who support you through thick and thin. But on the other side there are some people who like to have a swipe at you whether you've done good, bad or indifferent."

As a specialist batter, Bairstow has enjoyed a strong rapport with home crowds when fielding on the boundary's edge but this will pause given his dual role with the gloves.

Confidence at combining the two comes once more from previous such stints, he said, not least 2016 when he broke Andy Flower's record for a Test wicketkeeper by scoring 1,470 runs in a calendar year and combined this with 70 dismissals.

The 33-year-old is also mindful that people may analyse his gait since that injury but insists that any limp should not be misinterpreted.

"I don't know anyone that's had a major lower leg injury that walks exactly the same as previously," he said. "I'm not going to be running the same as last year, but that's OK."

While Bairstow returns, Jimmy Anderson has admitted he may not be risked for the Test against Ireland at Lord's that starts on 1 June following the groin strain that curtailed his recent outing for Lancashire. The 40-year-old pulled up lame just four overs into the 2019 Ashes – missing the rest of the series – but stressed this situation is different.

Anderson said: "I ripped my calf earlier that summer and it was a real push to get fit. I don't feel like this is anywhere near that severity.

"I am desperate to be fit for the first Ashes Test. If that means missing the Ireland Test, so be it."



▲ *The gloves are back on for Jonny Bairstow as England's Test wicketkeeper*
ALLAN MCKENZIE/SWPIX.COM/SHUTTERSTOCK



▼ *Qatar hopes to host more global events after last year's football World Cup*
HECTOR VIVAS/FIFA/GETTY IMAGES

Rugby league

Qatar expresses interest in hosting World Cup in 2025

Four nations in running after France pulled out of staging event due to funding cuts

Aaron Bower

Qatar is among four nations to have expressed an interest in staging the next Rugby League World Cup after France pulled out as hosts.

The organising committee conceded on Monday that they would be unable to stage the tournament in 2025 after failing to meet financial criteria set out by the French government, leaving the event at risk of a deficit.

The International Rugby League board held an emergency meeting to set out a strategy for seeking a replacement host, with a decision expected in July.

However, the body's chair, Troy Grant, revealed four nations have already expressed an interest in taking over from France including Qatar, which staged the men's football World Cup last year.

New Zealand, South Africa and Fiji have also stepped forward but Grant stressed that no option is off the table, including the prospect of delaying to 2026 or even cancelling altogether and planning for the 2029 tournament.

"We'll be guiding each expression of interest to our committee and all those and any options will be presented, and proper due diligence will be done," Grant said. "But the reality is the size of the tournament will have a bearing on what we do.

"There's potential to move it out of this cycle and create a new cycle … everything is on the table. Everything is a possibility at this stage. All options are on the table as we understand that time is running out and we need to move quickly."

Qatar has ramped up its interest in major sporting events and organisations in recent years. The Arab nation's hosting of last year's Fifa World Cup attracted global attention, while the Qatari billionaire, Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani, has this week made an improved offer to purchase Manchester United. Elsewhere in football, Paris Saint-Germain is owned by Qatar Sports Investment. The gulf state will also host next year's Under-19s Asian Cup, as well as the 2030 Asian Games.

But a Qatar bid to bring rugby league to the Middle East would be arguably its most interesting move yet. Grant was hesitant to discuss too much about Qatar's preliminary expression of interest, though he did concede that the high temperatures around October and November, when the tournament would likely take place, could be a factor in any decision-making process.

"I haven't looked at the temperatures there," he said. "But ours would be slightly earlier than the football so seasonal conditions would be tough, I'd imagine. They're the kind of factors we need to consider. We've no due diligence to give any expression of interest their due course of credit. We haven't made any assessment in regards to the viability of them."

Last year's Rugby League World Cup in England saw the men's, women's and wheelchair tournaments run alongside each other to great acclaim. The plan had been for France to do the same but with a youth tournament included too. Grant admitted that if the World Cup is still held in 2025, that multi-tournament format will be difficult to replicate given the tight timescales involved in effectively repackaging and rebuilding an event in a different country within a little over two years.

"The uniqueness of three World Cups being run at the same time was something that drew record investment," he said.

"We're the only sport that's conducted our World Cup format like that and it stood us aside from other sports. It's a massive selling point, so to abandon that strategy would be disappointing: but we have to be practical in any decisions we make going forward."

Athletics

World record holder Kipruto suspended after doping charge

Sean Ingle

The world 10km record holder, Rhonex Kipruto, has been suspended for suspected doping offences in yet another serious blow to the reputation of Kenyan athletics.

The 23-year-old, who also won a world championship bronze medal in 2019 as a teenager, was charged by the Athletics Integrity Unit with "use of a prohibited substance or method" after inconsistencies were found in his biological passport between July 2018 and March 2022. If found guilty he faces a four-year ban.

Kipruto, who set his 10km world record by running 26min 24sec in Valencia in 2020, has denied any wrongdoing and said he was ready to undergo a longitudinal study on his blood markers under 24-7 supervision. "I don't cheat or dope! The truth is on my side," he added. "This is all I can say."

His manager, Davor Savija, said he had already spent $30,000 (£24,000) trying to prove his athlete's innocence - and that independent physiologists believed there were other explanations for Kipruto's suspicious blood values, including periods of de-training, serious infectious disease and significant consumption of alcohol. Savija also claimed that there were also no red flags in Kipruto's blood data in 2019 or 2020, which were his two most successful seasons.

Kipruto's coach, Brother Colm O'Connell, who guided 800m world record-holder David Rudisha to glory at London 2012, also insisted he was clean. "I carefully choose who I work with and to whom I dedicate my energy," he said. "I know Rhonex is an honest young man and it hurts me to see him suffering now.

"Our strategy is to train hard, and that's the only way we achieve results. I have said many times that I am in favour of systematically combating doping so that we can protect clean athletes like Rhonex."

Still, Kipruto faces an uphill struggle to clear his name. If found guilty, he will join the 65-strong list of Kenyan athletes that are currently banned for doping offences. Those include the 2021 Boston Marathon winner Diana Kipyokei, who was handed a six-year ban for using the prohibited substance triamcinolone acetonide. The 2017 Paris Marathon winner, Purity Rionoripo, was banned for five years after testing positive for the banned diuretic furosemide.



▲ *Kenya's Rhonex Kipruto faces a four-year ban if found guilty*

Enciso, Almirón and the clash that has captured imagination of Paraguay

International teammates discuss their long roads to the Premier League before Newcastle-Brighton match

David Hytner



Julio Enciso admits that he was too nervous to approach Miguel Almirón. It was June 2021, Enciso had received his first call-up to the Paraguay squad and he wanted to arrange a shirt swap with Almirón, the team's *craque*.

"I actually asked the manager at the time, Eduardo Berizzo, if he could ask Miguel for the shirt," Enciso says. "I was 17 and, as you can understand, I was a bit nervous. It was a very special moment for me - to play for the national team and to meet Miguel like that."

Berizzo made it happen and so there they were, Enciso - the Libertad prodigy, who moved to Brighton last summer - and Almirón, the Newcastle favourite, handing over their shirts and smiling for a photograph. Enciso exchanged his Libertad '19' jersey; Almirón his Newcastle '24'.

"Ah, yes, I remember … Julio asking the manager and all the rest," Almirón says, after a little prompting; it was obviously not such a big deal to him. "What we knew from the beginning was that Julio was a talent, he had every possibility to go a long way. We saw that the national team shirt did not weigh him down and he is now where he should be - in one of the best leagues in the world."

The international teammates will be in opposition at St James' Park tonight; the Premier League meeting between their clubs has plenty on the line in terms of European qualification. Newcastle are determined to secure their place in the Champions League group stage, having last played there in 2002-03, while Brighton are chasing European football for the first time. If a Champions League finish is likely to prove beyond them, the Europa League is firmly within their grasp.

Yet for all the buildup in England, there is just as much pride and excitement in Paraguay, the South American country of 6.7 million people, the majority of whom are football fanatics. The Premier League has long been the most watched overseas competition there and now that Enciso has joined Almirón in it, there is even more interest, Brighton shirts coming to be visible on the streets, those of Newcastle already established.

The game has been billed in the Paraguayan press as Almirón's Newcastle v Enciso's Brighton, it is (of course) live on TV and, for the two players, it will offer a reminder of how they are living the dream, of their journeys and, also, the ground that they intend to cover, including with the national team. Paraguay's last appearance at a World Cup was in 2010 and great responsibility lies with Almirón, 29, and Enciso, 19, for the 2026 finals in the United States, Mexico and Canada. The South American qualifiers start in September.

"Every kid wants to play football and wants to play in the best league and for Paraguayans, that's the Premier League," Enciso says. "We would always sit down, family and friends, to watch the big games - typically, it would be Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal. I had a 'Ronaldo 7' United shirt that my dad gave me."

Almirón says: "I also watched a lot of the Premier League on TV - Chelsea, Man United, Liverpool. I remember enjoying Ronaldo, Carlos Tevez, Wayne Rooney. It's very important for the people of Paraguay to have two players here. It opens the door for other Paraguayan footballers."

Nine players from Paraguay have made Premier League appearances. Can Almirón name the other seven? "Paulo da Silva, Cristian Riveros, Diego Gavilán … Roque Santa Cruz, Antolín Alcaraz," he replies, before a pause. "Fabián Balbuena and Juan Iturbe." Correct.

Santa Cruz is the biggest name - the former Blackburn and Manchester City striker has legendary status in Paraguay, alongside José Luis Chilavert - but Almirón does not feel too far behind. "He's an inspiration," Enciso says. "We have him as our ambassador."

Enciso says that the joy of playing is the most important quality of a Paraguayan footballer but there is also the desire to fight, to use setbacks as fuel. When Almirón was 15, he struggled to make an impression at the academy of Cerro Porteño, one of the big clubs in Asunción, the coach telling him that he was too thin. Almirón remembers how he handled the disappointment - after a defining chat with his mother, who worked at a supermarket.

"She said to me: 'If you are not going to go back and train hard then you are going to come and work with me in the supermarket - that's the alternative'," Almirón says. "That was the motivation for me to get my bag and go straight out again, to return to training. I never worked in the supermarket. It was just this conversation I had with my mum."

Almirón's background is humble - he grew up in the San Pablo barrio of Asunción - and he was always driven to help his family. The same is true of Enciso, who was raised in Caaguazú, where he lived with his parents and parental grandparents. His father was a street vendor, his mother a babysitter and nanny and, as Enciso puts it, the "story was tough".

"I was pretty much all the time with my grandad because my parents were always out working," he says. "What my mum really wanted was to have a place of her own and a part of my dream to become a footballer was to make that happen. Thanks to God, I did. I bought them a house in December 2021."

By then, Enciso was a regular at Libertad. The forward had made his debut for them as a 15-year-old in 2019 and, at 16, he scored with the first touch of his Copa Libertadores debut against Club Wilstermann in the last 16 first leg. There was a reason why he was nicknamed *La Joya* (The Jewel).

It was hard, at first, for Enciso at Brighton, after his £9.5m transfer. The manager who signed him, Graham Potter, left for Chelsea last September - "A lot of things went through my head at that moment," Enciso says - and he made only two substitute appearances in the league before the World Cup break.

Since then, he has played in 14 of Brighton's 20 league games, plus three in the FA Cup, starting the semi-final penalty shootout defeat against Manchester United. He has earned the trust of the manager, Roberto De Zerbi, scoring three times, the last of them in Sunday's 3-0 win at Arsenal.


▲ Julio Enciso and Miguel Almirón on international duty with Paraguay

The best was the winner at Chelsea in April, a top-corner screamer from outside the area that was special on many levels. His grandfather has died and the game fell on his birthday. "So emotional," Enciso says. "I've watched the goal back a lot of times and it's the best one I've ever scored. Playing against Chelsea … Man United, as well. I used to watch them on TV, so to be actually facing them is incredible."

Almirón has been one of the season's feelgood stories. Hugely popular at Newcastle because of his positivity and remorselessness, he has added goals with such a vengeance that everybody wants to know the secret. In his three and a half campaigns at the club before this one, Almirón scored nine league goals. This season, he has 11.

"It cost me a lot [initially] at Newcastle - in other words, it took me time to adapt to the Premier League," he says. "In football, there are no secrets. It's down to hard work, training, being responsible, ambitious and looking to improve yourself every day."

Beneath the boyish smile, Almirón is a serious individual and his admiration for Eddie Howe is clear. The manager, who is similarly immersed in his professional life, has overseen the taking of a full squad and staff picture after each victory but Almirón says it is only one of his psychological ploys.

"The photos when we win are a really great thing for the group; we feel very united," he says. "But he [Howe] also puts motivational phrases on the wall - it will be like: 'We are a family.' And: 'We are all in this together.'

"A lot has changed since he came in. He is a real motivator who seeks perfection. The other thing I'd say about him is that when you arrive at the training ground you are thinking about football and when you leave you are still thinking about football."

Almirón says that the "expectation has changed a lot this season, definitely" - on the back of the Saudi takeover, Howe's arrival, the money spent on signings. And, yes, it adds up to pressure. A lot of it, especially with the goal of the Champions League so close.

"We do feel it," Almirón admits. "But we try to convert that pressure into motivation. For every player and also everyone connected to the club … the fans … we deserve to qualify. We'll do our best and, God willing, we will achieve our objective."


Julio Enciso has impressed at Brighton while Miguel Almirón has had his best season for Newcastle

'Every kid wants to play in the best league and for Paraguayans, that's the Premier League'



Sky Blues jubilant as Hamer nails it

Gustavo Hamer (left) wheels away to celebrate the goal that broke the deadlock for Coventry at the Riverside last night
PA

Sky Bet Championship playoffs

Hamer strike sends Coventry to Wembley

Middlesbrough 0

Coventry 1
Hamer 57

Coventry win 1-0 on agg

Louise Taylor
Riverside Stadium

Four-year contract extensions are rarely as deserved as the one signed by Mark Robins on the eve of this triumph. Not content with leading Coventry from League Two to the Championship, the former Manchester United forward has now guided them to the verge of football's promised land.

Gustavo Hamer's winner, bent superlatively into the top corner, secured the visitors a Wembley playoff final date with Luton, where victory will mean entry to the Premier League. Robins is on the verge of what many deemed mission impossible.

After spending years dodging homelessness and extinction, and, even now, coping with one of the second tier's lowest budgets, Coventry are one game away from returning to the top flight after 22 years.

Credit is due not merely to Hamer and Victor Gyokeres, Coventry's excellent Sweden striker, for undoing Michael Carrick's Middlesbrough, but also to Robins's outstanding defence. Rarely this season can Chuba Akpom, the Championship's leading scorer, have been so restricted.

"That was the longest game of my career," said Robins. "Middlesbrough are so good, give them any time and space and they'll hurt you. But my players are so tactically clever they stopped them. It's been an unbelievable team effort."

Small wonder that Steve Gibson, Boro's owner, seemed a study in directors' box dejection. He has a fine manager in Carrick but the former Manchester United midfielder – responsible for transforming a team that had looked relegation-bound under Chris Wilder last autumn – was left ruing his side's failure to translate the lion's share of possession into clear cut chances.

"I'm gutted for our fans," said Carrick. "Coventry are a very good, well organised, team, they defended very well and we've just come up a bit short. These experiences are never very nice. But congratulations to Mark and his staff."

The atmosphere was reminiscent of the good times here, most notably in 2006 when Steve McClaren's Boro swashbuckled their way into the Uefa Cup final.

At their very best, Carrick's class of 2022-23 can look almost as strong in midfield as that band of European adventurers and this perhaps explains why Robins tweaked Coventry's formation, leaving Gyokeres as his lone striker.

Ben Sheaf took the additional precaution of swiftly flattening Akpom early on when Boro fully stretched their guests courtesy of a stream of one- and two-touch passes. After prolonged treatment, Akpom eventually rose, albeit rather gingerly, to his feet and continued but he was never at his best.

Sheaf continued to prove a somewhat abrasive figure as he drew Hayden Hackney into an intriguing midfield duel. For quite a while Hackney looked to be winning it, yet for all Boro's overall dominance their final ball was wanting.

No matter that Boro controlled almost 70% of the first-half possession, they barely tested Ben Wilson. Tellingly, Coventry's goalkeeper did not face his first effort on target until the verge of half-time when Darragh Lenihan's soft header from a corner fell into his arms.

Then, in the 57th minute, Coventry emphasised their counterattacking threat by scoring with their first shot on target. It began when Ryan Giles conceded possession and the increasingly influential Gyokeres collected a through ball over the top and drew Zack Steffen off his line.

The Swede toed the ball on for the onrushing Hamer to send an imperious shot curving into the top corner after cutting in from the left, dodging a marker en route.

As Hamer, who would subsequently hit the bar with a free-kick, celebrated in front of the exultant visiting fans, poor Giles looked desolate but, exhibiting impressive management, Carrick summoned the defender for a quiet supportive word.

"It's a tough one to take and I'm so disappointed but I'm genuinely proud of the boys," said Boro's manager. "We'll come back stronger."

Playoff final
Luton v Coventry
27 May, Wembley



▲ *Kyle McFadzean (left) and Luke McNally battle Boro's Chuba Akpom*

Middlesbrough
4-2-3-1
Steffen; Smith● (Dijksteel 67), McNair●,(Crooks 88), Lenihan●, Giles; Hackney, Mowatt (Barlaser 66); Forss (Jones● 66), Akpom, McGree; Archer
Subs not used
Roberts, Fry, Bola

Coventry
3-5-1-1
Wilson●; McNally●, McFadzean●,(Panzo 85) Doyle●; Norton-Cuffy (Dabo 79), Allen (Godden 80), Kelly, Hamer●, Bidwell; Sheaf (Eccles 70); Gyokeres●
Subs not used
Moore, Wilson-Esbrand, Maguire

Referee David Coote **Attendance** 32,154

Barclays Women's Super League

Chelsea edge closer to title after Charles and Harder spark rout

West Ham 0

Chelsea 4
Charles 13, Harder 48, Ingle 64, Cuthbert 90

Suzanne Wrack
Chigwell Construction Stadium

Chelsea moved a step closer to a third successive Women's Super League title with a 4-0 defeat of West Ham moving them two points clear of Manchester United at the top of the table.

Emma Hayes had been dismissive of any fatigue as a result of Sunday's FA Cup final defeat of Manchester United but she made seven changes to the team, with goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger, defenders Eve Perisset and Maren Mjelde, midfielders Melanie Leupolz and Erin Cuthbert and forwards Lauren James and Guro Reiten all rested.

Chelsea were dominant from the off and could have had a penalty within the opening two minutes after Hawa Cissoko appeared to commit a handball offence, but the referee waved away appeals.

It took 13 minutes for the Blues to make the breakthrough, with Sam Kerr's shot blocked and Niamh Charles firing the loose ball beyond Mackenzie Arnold. It was a businesslike performance from Chelsea, with the more serious test awaiting them at Kingsmeadow on Sunday, where a win against Arsenal will be enough to ensure a third successive league and FA Cup double should Manchester United not beat Manchester City in the late kick-off on the same day.

"We've been chasing the whole year so being on top, we just have to keep chalking off the games," said Hayes. "The next game we're preparing for is against a team who have also had a tremendous season so I can't wait, to be honest."

The difference maker on Sunday, Pernille Harder, who came off the bench to set up Kerr's winner, forced a fine low save from Arnold as Chelsea sought a second, meeting Johanna Rytting Kaneryd's cross after she had been fed by a driving run from the halfway like by Kerr.

Hayes's side would have to wait until after the break to extend their lead, a defence-splitting pass from Sophie Ingle collected by Harder and drilled low into the far corner.

Ingle, a similarly influential substitute on Sunday, scored the third, heading into the roof of the net after Arnold had done well to save Magda Eriksson's header from a corner.

West Ham, who have now gone 10 games without a win, went close to pulling one back, with Zecira Musovic caught out by substitute Amalie Thestrup but Jess Carter was there to clear off the line and maintain their clean sheet. Cuthbert scored the fourth in added time, powering in from the edge of the box to extend their goal difference advantage over United to four.

In the race for Champions League football, third-place Arsenal's 4-1 victory over Everton was marred by another injury, this time to the influential midfielder Lia Wälti. The 30-year-old, who signed a contract extension last week, was carried off on a stretcher shortly after half-time after the Chelsea loanee Aggie Beever-Jones ploughed into her ankle with a high foot. It was reckless and the reaction of players around the fallen Wälti hinted at the severity of the impact.

The 19-year-old forward had her yellow upgraded to a straight red for the incident while furious Arsenal players regrouped in a huddle, the team having already lost Leah Williamson, Beth Mead and Vivianne Miedema to ACL injuries and Kim Little, Caitlin Foord and Steph Catley for large parts of the season.

After the match, Everton released a statement from "devastated" Beever-Jones. The forward said her "lunge resulted in a bad but unintentionally reckless challenge" and that she was "so sorry". "I hope the injury is not too serious and that you make a fast and full recovery."

West Ham
4-2-3-1
Arnold; Shimizu, Fisk, Cissoko●, Smith; Longhurst, Parker; Evans (Thestrup 65), Brynjarsdóttir (Hayashi 65), Tysiak (Snerle 55); Asseyi (Atkinson 81)
Subs not used
Hillyerd, Denton, Cooke, Houssein, Ademiluyi

Chelsea
4-2-3-1
Musovic; Carter, Eriksson, Buchanan, Charles (Abdullina 81); Ingle, Fleming (Cuthbert 69); Rytting Kaneryd, Harder (Reiten 69), Cankovic (James 69); Kerr (Svitkova 81)
Subs not used
Berger, Leupolz, Périsset, Mjelde

Referee Louise Saunders



▲ *Sophie Ingle heads home Chelsea's third goal in their victory at West Ham*
CATHERINE IVILL/GETTY IMAGES

Chelsea close to buying stake in Strasbourg to start project

Jacob Steinberg

Chelsea are close to kickstarting their multi-club project by buying a stake in Strasbourg. The deal would be a major boost for the Premier League side's owners, Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital, who have been looking for suitable clubs to purchase since last summer.

Boehly has spoken about a multi-club model being a way "we can show pathways for our young superstars to get on to the Chelsea pitch while getting them real game time".

Chelsea have looked at a number of clubs in France, Belgium, Portugal and South America. There have been talks with Bordeaux but sources indicated a deal with Strasbourg made more financial sense. The size of the proposed stake is unknown but talks are progressing smoothly and it is understood the price would depend on whether Strasbourg avoid relegation from Ligue 1. They are five points above the bottom four with three games left.

Chelsea, who are also believed to be looking at buying a stake in the Portuguese club Portimonense, stepped up their interest in Strasbourg after Boehly was unable to reach a deal with Bordeaux's president, Gérard López. Boehly has held productive discussions with Strasbourg's president, Marc Keller, in recent months. Chelsea initially wanted a full purchase but were told they would have to settle for partial ownership.

There are 11 shareholders at Strasbourg and Keller, whose 27% stake is the biggest, has been alive to their concerns. Keller, a former Strasbourg player and a frontrunner to become the next president of France's football federation, has rebuilt the Ligue 1 side since becoming president in 2012 and is keen for the club to retain its identity.

Gaining influence at Strasbourg would give Chelsea a footing in a country that produces some of the best players in the world. Chelsea were approached for comment.

The practice has been followed by Manchester City's parent company, City Football Group, which has a number of satellite clubs around the world.

Uefa's president, Aleksander Ceferin, recently hinted at relaxing restrictions on clubs with the same owner playing in the same European competitions.



▲ *Todd Boehly has been looking for clubs to buy since last summer*

▼ *Ivan Toney will not return to action until January 2024*
CAMERA SPORT/GETTY IMAGES



Toney and Brentford in limbo after a ban without upsides

Suspension has ramifications for club, country and player but is also a fig leaf over a deep problem in the game

Nick Ames

Ivan Toney will have seen a ban coming down the track but few things can adequately prepare a footballer for the fact that, over the next eight months, he will be unable to ply his trade. The outcome is among the worst he could have envisaged and casts a shroud of uncertainty over the prospects of a player who has blossomed into one of the country's most accomplished centre-forwards.

When Toney, who has been suspended after admitting 232 breaches of FA betting rules between 25 February 2017 and 23 January 2021, returns to action he will face a battle to pick up where he left off. Only Erling Haaland and Harry Kane sit ahead of him in this season's Premier League scoring charts, his 20 goals contributing heavily to a fine year for Brentford. At 27 he is approaching his peak and a lay-off until next January will eat away valuable time from a career whose star had soared.

Three years ago Toney was completing a prolific League One season with Peterborough, where he had finally found a home after being shunted around on five different loans from Newcastle. The Magpies had taken a punt on a 19-year-old who turned heads at Northampton but, until Brentford's arrival at the highest level, he had made only two top-flight appearances as a substitute.

Now Toney can claim a record of better than a goal every two games in the Premier League and can justifiably say he has got there the hard way. In August 2021 he told the Guardian of his "bumpy road" to the top, having fired Brentford to the elite in his first season at the club, but the sanction imposed by an independent regulatory commission yesterday may present the biggest obstacle yet.

Toney will be allowed to resume training in mid-September but his return to competitive action four months later will inevitably be to an unfamiliar backdrop. Football rarely waits around and Thomas Frank will have been obliged to remould his front line. A hamstring injury ruled Toney out of Sunday's 2-0 win over West Ham while a mobile front three of Yoane Wissa, Bryan Mbeumo and Kevin Schade showed how life might look in his absence. An instant return to leading man status is not guaranteed and Brentford, ever meticulous, will have prepared a transfer window contingency. Equally, it is a hammer blow to a team that has been propelled by his goals. Toney is superb leading the line and, for at least half of 2023-24, Frank must find a way to compensate.

That may have proved the case anyway given Toney is yet to extend his contract beyond 2025 and, before the news of his ban, Brentford could have expected to fetch £50m if and when suitors came calling this summer. As things stand that kind of figure is a pipe dream and opportunistic rivals may sniff a bargain. Half a season out of action is a small encumbrance if you can secure one of the division's best strikers for a fraction of his usual value. It is not entirely impossible that the punishment may expedite Toney's next upwards move.

In truth, though, there are no upsides for anyone. The affected parties include Gareth Southgate, whose decision to select Toney for England's fixtures in March seemed strange given the spectre of a ban loomed large and he had not been called up for the World Cup. Southgate felt he could not ignore Toney's domestic form and had been mightily impressed by his display at Arsenal on 11 February. He subsequently gave Toney an international debut against Ukraine but is now shorn of an obvious deputy for Harry Kane as the clock ticks towards Euro 2024.

The footballing ramifications will play out in time but there is a serious social context to take in. A sport that has rolled out the red carpet to the gambling industry in almost every accessible corner should consider a high-profile case of this nature has been waiting to happen. Toney's breaches are not to be excused and may not be analysed until the independent commission publishes its written reasons, but it is a fact that at least three of his employers - including Brentford - have gladly plastered betting firms' names on the fronts of their shirts, a form of advertisement that will be banned in 2026.

That is not to imply cause and effect in this case, but nobody in the football industry can complete a day's work without exposure to numerous exhortations that they gamble. A reassessment of priorities, and of the extent to which football leaves players open to such influences, is long overdue. Otherwise it will be hard to escape the sense that, even if the FA have been correct to punish Toney, his sanction simply represents a fig leaf over a deep, pernicious problem that lies at the authorities' door.

While the money keeps rolling in, Toney will pay the necessary price for breaking the rules and wonder how his seemingly unstoppable momentum shuddered to a halt.

Premier League's big bans

Nine months
Eric Cantona, Man Utd, Jan 1995
Attacked a fan at Selhurst Park
Mark Bosnich, Chelsea, Dec 2002
Tested positive for cocaine. Did not play in the English top-flight again
Eight months
Ivan Toney, Brentford, May 2023
Rio Ferdinand, Man Utd, Jan 2004
Missed a drugs test
Seven months
Adrian Mutu, Chelsea, Oct 2004
Tested positive for cocaine

Striker accepts ban after 232 breaches of gambling rules

Continued *from back page*

of these breaches and he admitted to the remaining 232.

"His sanctions were subsequently imposed by an independent Regulatory Commission following a personal hearing. He is permitted to return to training only with his club for the final four months of his suspension starting from 17 September."

In previous high-profile betting cases Kieran Trippier was banned for 10 weeks and fined £70,000 after bets were placed on his prospective transfer from Tottenham to Atlético Madrid, while Joey Barton was the subject of an 18-month sanction for more than 1,000 breaches of Rule E8.

Toney's punishment comes at a time when football is reluctantly confronting its ingrained relationship with the gambling industry. The Premier League recently announced a voluntary ban on shirt sponsorship by betting companies, but the presence of gambling advertising remains pervasive at all levels, with Sky Bet the title sponsor of the EFL.

> *'I will now focus on returning to the game I love'*
>
> **Ivan Toney**
> *Brentford striker*

Brentford's owner, Matthew Benham, is a former professional gambler and the founder of SmartOdds, a company that provides data services to companies "looking to outsmart the sports betting markets".

Anti-gambling campaigners criticised Toney's punishment. The Big Step, which wants to end gambling advertising and sponsorship in football, tweeted: "If you force young people to endorse addictive products, don't be surprised if they use them."

Silva service keeps relentless City on course for treble

Manchester City	**4**
Silva 23 37, Akanji 76, Álvarez 90	
Real Madrid	**0**

Manchester City win 5-1 on agg

	Man City	Real Madrid
Possession	61%	39%
Shots on target	7	3
Total attempts	16	7

David Hytner
Etihad Stadium

It was not even close, which was surely the most impressive thing from Manchester City's point of view as they roared into the Champions League final; another step closer to ultimacy, immortality.

The power came during an eviscerating first half, when Bernardo Silva scored two and Real Madrid were reduced to quivering wrecks, fortunate that the damage was not heavier. Jack Grealish had one of the games of his life and he was ably supported by pretty much everybody around him.

With this Madrid team on these kinds of nights, partly because of their history – 14 European Cups and all the rest – there is usually the sense that they are never dead, that they will find a way back. Not here.

Madrid knitted a few moves together in the second half and if that bears reporting it was because of how one-sided it had been previously. There was never the feeling that they had another comeback in them, another dose of Champions League voodoo to rival that with which they had devastated City at this stage of last season's competition.

City managed the second half and it was over when Manuel Akanji touched a Kevin De Bruyne free-kick into Éder Militão, who watched the ball fly in off him. Militão had come into the Madrid team for Antonio Rüdiger and with the brief of stopping Erling Haaland.

Madrid did at least prevent City's goal king from scoring, although mainly because Thibaut Courtois once again showed why he is surely the best goalkeeper in Europe. Yet the positives for Carlo Ancelotti were in grievously short supply, the only other one being that the full-time scoreline did not reflect City's superiority. The Madrid manager was questioned about his future afterwards. He said there was no doubt that he would stay on.

It probably said a lot that the celebrations from the City crowd after the third goal were not overly wild, which was also the case when the substitute Julian Álvarez scored the fourth in stoppage time. It was laid on by a killer ball from another replacement, Phil Foden – which was very much a motif of the occasion. City's passing was loaded with fizz and incision.

The home fans have feasted on the travails of visiting teams, how they have routinely been overrun. It is almost as if they expect to win and be entertained richly along the way. City smashed RB Leipzig 7-0 here in the last 16. It was 3-0 against Bayern Munich in the quarter-final. Now this.

City have not lost at the Etihad in 26 Champions League matches. They are on a 23-game unbeaten streak in all competitions, playing the most destructive football of the Pep Guardiola era. It was yet another statement and they will be hot favourites to beat Internazionale in the final.

It was one of the biggest nights in City's history. In the background was their looming capture of a fifth Premier League title in six seasons, along with the FA Cup final against Manchester United. But it really was in the background because this was all about the Champions League, the trophy that they lack. And crave.

Guardiola did not overthink it. He picked the same team as the first leg and demanded that they impose themselves from the first whistle. It was extraordinary how they did so. City were a blur of sky blue, bringing the press and the intensity, their movements and interplay so sharp. Madrid reeled, sinking into two deep banks – or survival mode.

The first half was traumatic for them, Luka Modric a symbol of their difficulties. Twice in the opening 20 minutes he erred with passes and his evening did not get any better. It was difficult to remember him struggling so sorely for rhythm, although he was hardly the only Madrid player who barely turned up.

Rodri dragged wide in the early running, then Courtois made a pair of high-end saves to repel Haaland headers. City's remorseless pressure told when De Bruyne flashed a low pass through for Silva, who had melted into space behind the Madrid defence. Silva never looked like missing, the finish lifted inside the near corner.

Madrid could barely get out in the first half, although Toni Kroos did unload a vicious shot from distance that rattled the crossbar in the 35th minute. Moments earlier, Kyle Walker had chased back at high-speed to nick the ball away from Vinícius Jr. How the home crowd loved that.

City were winning every duel; Madrid looked shell-shocked. It got worse for them when Silva scored



The final
Manchester City v Internazionale
8pm, 10 June, Ataturk Olympic Stadium

again after Grealish had moved in from the left before banging a pass into Ilkay Gündogan. The midfielder showed his twinkle toes and worked Courtois, the ball looping up for Silva, whose guided header was a snapshot in composure.

Guardiola lived every moment, arguing with De Bruyne at one point, blowing kisses to Grealish at another. Grealish struck fear into Madrid with his directness, the close control and dribbling while he did not neglect his tracking back duties, either.

Alaba extended Ederson with a free-kick that wobbled and dipped and Madrid wondered whether one goal could change everything. But they did not threaten again until the 83rd minute when Ederson saved from the substitute Dani Ceballos and, by then, it was finished.

Haaland had been denied by Courtois on 73 minutes, the goalkeeper diverting the ball up and on to the crossbar, but it did not matter for City. Can anybody stop them?

Manchester City
4-1-4-1
Ederson; Walker, Stones, Días●, Akanji; Rodri; Silva, De Bruyne (Foden 84), Gündogan● (Mahrez 79), Grealish●; Haaland (Álvarez 89)

Real Madrid
4-3-3
Courtois; Carvajal● (Vázquez 80) Militão, Alaba, Camavinga● (Tchouaméni 80); Valverde, Kroos (Asensio 70), Modric (Rüdiger 63); Rodrygo (Ceballos 80), Benzema, Vinícius

Referee Szymon Marciniak (Pol) **Attendance** 52,313



Putting City on path to Istanbul

Bernardo Silva scores the opening goal to put Manchester City in control of their semi-final
PAUL ELLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Analysis
Jonathan Liew *Etihad Stadium*



Madrid find that myth and aura alone can't match the inexorable inevitability of hard power

It was at around 70 minutes, shortly after Toni Kroos had followed Luka Modric off the pitch, that the edges of the night began to sharpen a little and this Champions League semi-final took on a perfect clarity. Manchester City were going to win and Real Madrid were going to lose and no tweak or tactic, no switch or substitution, was going to change that fact.

Real seemed to realise it too. Perhaps they were only 2-0 down but they were also bruised and broken, scarred and scared, tired of running into dead ends filled with blue shirts. Vinícius Junior had long since stopped trying to beat Kyle Walker and had instead resorted to dribbling past as many players as possible, like kids do in the playground. The fouls became more deliberate and more desperate. Even the Spanish radio commentators at the back of the press box had given up shouting and exhorting in favour of low, funereal voices and the odd illegible hand gesture.

On the biggest stage, in their favourite competition, the most dominant club in Champions League history had been placed under intolerable levels of stress, and simply detonated.

It finished four-nil, and perhaps that flattered Madrid a little. Ultimately only the flailing fingertips of Thibaut Courtois prevented this from becoming a total humiliation, the sort of scoreline that eventually earns a game its own Wikipedia page. It was probably City's greatest performance under Pep Guardiola, a kind of footballing perfection, a museum piece, not merely a lesson but a scolding, sport as scorched earth strategy. Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair! Nothing beside remains.

What does remain? Certainly very little of this great Madrid side. Everyone knew this was a team in need of a transitional phase, a shift from the old to the new. Nobody expected it to happen in a single night. Modric – horrible performance – went off on 63 minutes. Kroos – not much better – departed a little later. Karim Benzema looked old. Will any of them ever play a game of this magnitude again? Maybe, but not together. At the point when Madrid most needed mobility and energy, they were left trying to press and disrupt the world's best passing side with myth and aura alone.

For once the numbers told much of the story. At the time City scored their first goal they had completed 196 passes to Madrid's 30. It took 14 minutes for Rodrygo to have his first touch of the game. During the first half City had 196 touches in the final third; Madrid had 10. This wasn't just dominance. There was a sadistic scorn to it too, the way City took their set-pieces as quickly as possible, the way Pep Guardiola threw a strop at every backward pass. City didn't just beat Madrid, they barely acknowledged them.

With the greatest of respect to Matteo Darmian and Edin Dzeko, it feels safe to assume that City will finally slake their Champions League thirst against Internazionale in Istanbul next month. They are so clearly the best team in the world at this point that it already feels a little passé, a little obvious, to say so. Nor should we imagine that City have only just started playing at this level. The last team to beat them over 180 minutes in this competition was Tottenham. On a long enough x-axis, City were always going to cross the winning post at some point.

And so one of the world's richest states spends years trying to hire the world's greatest coach, succeeds, and then gives him literally everything he needs.

Every other club in the world, with the exception of Paris Saint-Germain, has to operate within the constraints of finance or fortune. Every other club in the world has flaws or problem areas that they can't address right now, but hope to at some point in the future. Guardiola, by contrast, gets the staff he wants, the players he wants when he wants them, gets their replacements ahead of schedule.

So you don't just sign Erling Haaland, you sign Julián Álvarez to give him a rest. Kalvin Phillips arrives for £45 million, doesn't play all season, and it's fine. You decide – and just reflect on the breathtaking audacity of this for a second – that you need an upgrade on Phil Foden, and so up pops Jack Grealish. If someone accuses you of breaking the rules, you hire the world's greatest lawyers to shoot them down. This is perfection, but not so much the perfection of great art as the perfection of a finely-executed military campaign, the perfection of unlimited wealth, the perfection of political strength, the perfection of a pointless mile-high crystal pyramid in the middle of the desert. No academy players and no Mancunians started for City last night. Does this matter? Does anything matter?

Nobody should begrudge City fans their joy at this point. This has been their journey and their success as much as anyone else's, and with a little perspective they may even realise that they are not as hated as they sometimes assume. Rather, the overwhelming sensation here for the neutral is indifference, a shrug at the inexorable inevitability of hard power. Everybody in this sport is tainted a little, and even on this unlevel playing field City fans have earned their moment of consummate triumph. By the same token, nobody else is obliged to feel anything about it whatsoever.

> *This is perfection, but not so much the perfection of great art as the perfection of a finely-executed military campaign*



▶ *Julián Álvarez replaced Erling Haaland and scored City's fourth*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

Results

Football

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
Semi-finals: Second leg

Manchester City (2) **4** — **Real Madrid** (0) **0**
Silva 23 37, Akanji 76, Álvarez 90
(agg 5-1)
52,313

SKY BET CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS
Semi-finals: Second leg

Middlesbrough (0) **0** — **Coventry** (0) **1**
Hamer 57
(agg 0-1)
32,154

BARCLAYS WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Chelsea	20	17	1	2	61	15	+46	**52**
Manchester Utd	20	16	2	2	53	11	+42	**50**
Arsenal	20	15	2	3	49	12	+37	**47**
Manchester City	20	14	2	4	46	21	+25	**44**
Aston Villa	20	10	3	7	42	34	+8	**33**
Everton	20	8	3	9	25	32	-7	**27**
Liverpool	20	6	4	10	21	35	-14	**22**
West Ham	20	5	2	13	19	41	-22	**17**
Brighton	20	4	4	12	25	60	-35	**16**
Tottenham	20	4	2	14	25	44	-19	**14**
Leicester	20	4	1	15	13	46	-33	**13**
Reading	20	3	2	15	22	50	-28	**11**

Everton (0) **1** — **Arsenal** (4) **4**
Snoejis 86 — Foord 29 39, McCabe 33, Wubben-Moy 42

West Ham (0) **0** — **Chelsea** (1) **4**
Charles 13, Harder 48, Ingle 64, Cuthbert 90

CINCH SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFFS
Final: First leg

Airdrieonians (0) **1** — **Hamilton** (0) **0**
Smith 56

Tennis

ATP/WTA ITALIAN OPEN (Rome)

Men: Quarter-finals: H Rune (Den) bt N Djokovic (Ser) 6-2 4-6 6-2; **C Ruud** (Nor) bt F Cerundolo (Arg) 7-6 (5) 6-4

Women: Quarter-finals: J Ostapenko (Lat) bt P Badosa (Sp) 6-2 4-6 6-3; **E Rybakina** (Kaz) bt I Swiatek (Pol) 2-6 7-6 (3) 2-2 ret

Cycling

GIRO D'ITALIA

Stage 11 (Camaiore-Tortona; 219km) **1** P Ackermann (Ger) UAE Emirates 5hr 09min 02sec; **2** J Milan (It) Bahrain Victorious; **3** M Cavendish (GB) Astana Qazaqstan; **4** M Pedersen (Den) Trek-Segafredo; **5** S Oldani (It) Alpecin-Deceuninck; **6** V Albanese (It) Eolo-Kometa; **7** M Mayrhofer (Ger) DSM; **8** D Ballerini (It) Soudal Quick-Step; **9** S Consonni (It) Cofidis; **10** A Marit (Bel) Intermarche-Circus-Wanty all at same time

Overall standings: 1 G Thomas (GB) Ineos Grenadiers 44hr 35min 35sec; **2** P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma +0:02sec; **3** J Almeida (Por) UAE Emirates +0:22; **4** A Leknessund (Nor) DSM +0:35; **5** D Caruso (It) Bahrain Victorious +1:28; **6** L Kamna (Ger) Bora-Hansgrohe +1:52; **7** E Dunbar (Ire) Jayco-Alula +2:32; **8** T Arensman (Neth) Ineos Grenadiers +2:32; **9** L De Plus (Bel) Ineos Grenadiers +2:36; **10** A Paret-Peintre (Fr) AG2R Citroën +2:48

FOUR DAYS OF DUNKIRK

Stage two (Compiegne-Laon; 169.9km) **1** R Gregoire (Fr) Groupama-FDJ 3hr 59min 5sec; **2** E Vernon (GB) Soudal Quick-Step; **3** B Cosnefroy (Fr) AG2R Citroën; **4** P Sagan (Svk) TotalEnergies; **5** V Lafay (Fra) Cofidis all at same time

Overall standings: 1 S Leroux (Fr) Van Rysel-Roubaix Lille Metropole 8hr 30min 32sec; **2** O Kooij (Neth) Jumbo-Visma +0:01sec; **3** R Gregoire (Fr) Groupama-FDJ at same time; **4** E Vernon (GB) Soudal Quick-Step +0:05; **5** PA Cote (Can) Human Powered Health at same time

Fixtures

Football (8pm unless stated)
Uefa Europa League
Semi-finals: Second leg Bayer Leverkusen (0) v Roma (1); Sevilla (1) v Juventus (1)
Uefa Europa Conference League
Semi-finals: Second leg AZ Alkmaar (1) v West Ham (2); Basel (2) v Fiorentina (1)
Premier League
Newcastle v Brighton (7.30pm)
Sky Bet League One playoffs
Semi-finals Second leg Sheffield Wednesday (0) v Peterborough (4)

Cricket (11am unless stated)
LV= Insurance County Championship
Division One (first day of four)
Hampshire v Northamptonshire, Rose Bowl; Middlesex v Somerset, Lord's; Nottinghamshire v Essex, Trent Bridge; Surrey v Kent, the Oval
Division Two (first day of four) Gloucestershire v Durham, Bristol; Sussex v Glamorgan, Hove; Worcestershire v Leicestershire, New Road
Charlotte Edwards Cup
Group stage Sunrisers v Sparks, Chelmsford (6.30pm)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Salisbury 1.30 My Genghis **2.05** Juniper Berries **2.35** Palmar Bay **3.10** Jax Edge **3.45** Kingfisher King **4.20** Mantoog **4.55** Lionella
York 1.50 Mountain Peak **2.25** Free Wind **3.00** Northern Express (nap) **3.35** The Foxes (nb) **4.10** Walbank **4.45** Cuban Thunder **5.20** Rathgar
Perth 2.15 Bix Beiderbecke **2.50** Conkwell Legend **3.25** Aurora Thunder **4.00** Scots Poet **4.35** Everyday Champagne **5.06** Izzys Champion **5.38** Beauty To Behold
Fontwell Park 4.50 Stiletto **5.25** Mickyh **5.55** Any News **6.30** In The Air **7.05** Pure Theatre **7.40** Martin Spirit **8.15** Good News
Newmarket 5.15 Townsend Manor **5.45** Icy Dip **6.20** Spring Dawn **6.55** Global Esteem **7.30** Appier **8.05** Connemara Coast **8.40** Fierce

Breaking bad
Bairstow feared he would never walk again after accident

Page 32 →



National pride
Paraguay stars Almirón and Enciso on their club rivalry

Page 33 →



The Guardian
Thursday 18 May 2023

Sport



Match report
David Hytner
Page 36 →

Manchester City	Real Madrid
4	0
Silva 23 37, Akanji 76, Álvarez 90	

5-1 on aggregate

'Pain motivated us'
Guardiola's City exact brutal revenge on Real

▲ *Bernardo Silva slides on his knees in delight after doubling City's advantage with his second goal at the Etihad*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

Jamie Jackson
Etihad Stadium

A delighted Pep Guardiola said that Manchester City used having to "swallow the poison" of last year's semi-final defeat by Real Madrid to eliminate them this time and reach next month's Champions League final against Internazionale with the finest display of his managerial career.

City blew the holders away with a 4-0 victory to win 5-1 on aggregate via two goals from Bernardo Silva, another from Manuel Akanji and Julián Álvarez's final blow.

Last season City were winning 5-3 overall at Real going into added time before two Rodrygo goals took the tie into extra time. Karim Benzema then scored a penalty to take Real through and cause City heartbreak.

"We had to swallow the poison," said Guardiola. "All the pain we had in one year, for one season, was there today. I have a feeling that for one year we had a fear in our stomach about what happened last season but today we went out with everything we had.

"Last season was so painful and people say it was a lack of character from the players but one year later we show just how special these players are.

"Congratulations to our chairman, our owner and every last person [in our organisation] because they work with a real purpose and now we are there.

"We accepted the defeat. One year later we are in the final. Life always gives you a second opportunity. Don't give up; try again, try again. We're one game away from the Premier League title - three years in a row - and [in a] second Champions League [final] in three years. That is consistency.

"We spoke before the game to the players, to ask themselves if they want to play against Inter. In the bad moments, ask yourself, and if you do then you will beat Real. They played with the spirit that we needed to do it."

In 14 years as a manager Guardiola has also coached Barcelona and Bayern Munich. He was asked where this display ranked among his best. "It's the highest, considering the opponent and it's the Champions League semi-final," he said.

City now need one victory in the Premier League followed by winning the FA Cup final and the Champions League final to complete the treble. "We are closer - and players will think of it," he said. "But we have to try and close the league against Chelsea [on Sunday at home] to give more time to prepare for the finals.

"A final against an Italian team, people will say we are favourites and that is the worst that can happen."

Carlo Ancelotti, the Real Madrid coach, confirmed he expects to remain in charge next season. "The president has been quite clear two weeks ago - there are no doubts about my staying on," he said. Real won the Copa del Rey earlier this month but are enduring a disappointing season in La Liga.

Report and analysis *Pages 36-37 →*

Toney banned by FA for eight months after betting breach

Paul MacInnes

Ivan Toney will not play again for Brentford or England this year after he was banned from football for eight months after accepting 232 breaches of the FA's rules on betting.

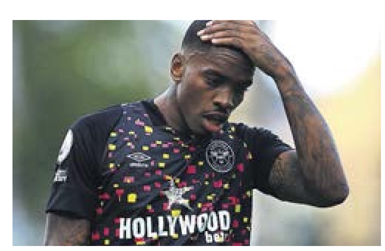
The forward was expected to be hit with a heavy punishment after he was subject to 262 FA charges at the end of 2022, but the extent of the ban has still surprised many within the game. Under the terms of the sanction, Toney will be suspended from playing until January 2024 and cannot train with his Brentford teammates until September.

In a statement posted on Twitter yesterday, Toney said: "Today I have received notification of my eight-month ban from football following a hearing before an FA Regulatory Commission that took place yesterday. I am naturally disappointed that I will be unable to play for the next eight months. The written reasons for the commission's decision have not yet been published, so I make no further comment at this point other than to thank my family and friends, Brentford FC and our fans for their continued support, through what has been a very difficult time. I now focus on returning to play the game I love next season."

The FA has charged Toney under Rule E8, which bans players from betting on games, asking others to do so on their behalf or sharing privileged information for betting purposes.

"Ivan Toney has been suspended from all football and football-related activity with immediate effect for eight months, which runs up to and including 16 January 2024, fined £50,000 and warned as to his future conduct for breaches of the FA's Betting Rules," the FA said in a statement.

"The Brentford FC forward was charged with 262 breaches of FA Rule E8 in total between 25 February 2017 and 23 January 2021. The FA subsequently withdrew 30 35 →



▲ *Ivan Toney will not play again until January 2024 after his ban*

Gtech

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I have bought every make of vacuum cleaner over the years. I can confirm that this is the BEST I have ever used!
Jayne L ★★★★★

"Absolutely love these."
They are both light in weight, with real power. Also they are so easy to empty with no faff, brilliant. Would highly recommend.
Vicky S ★★★★★

"Amazing! The best vacuum I've ever used."
It copes brilliantly with all the dog hair, is light and easily manoeuvrable and it makes vacuuming a pleasure for the first time. My house has never been so clean!
Debbie F ★★★★★

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Ω
OMEGA

Starmer does have a vision - and it's not New Labour 2.0 *Martin Kettle, page 3*
Phoneless in a playground, I'm oddly content *Emma Brockes, page 4*
Why Essex's rubbish dumps are sliding into the Thames *The long read, page 5*
G2 Daily pullout life & arts section *Inside*

The Guardian Thursday 18 May 2023

Journal

Opinion and ideas

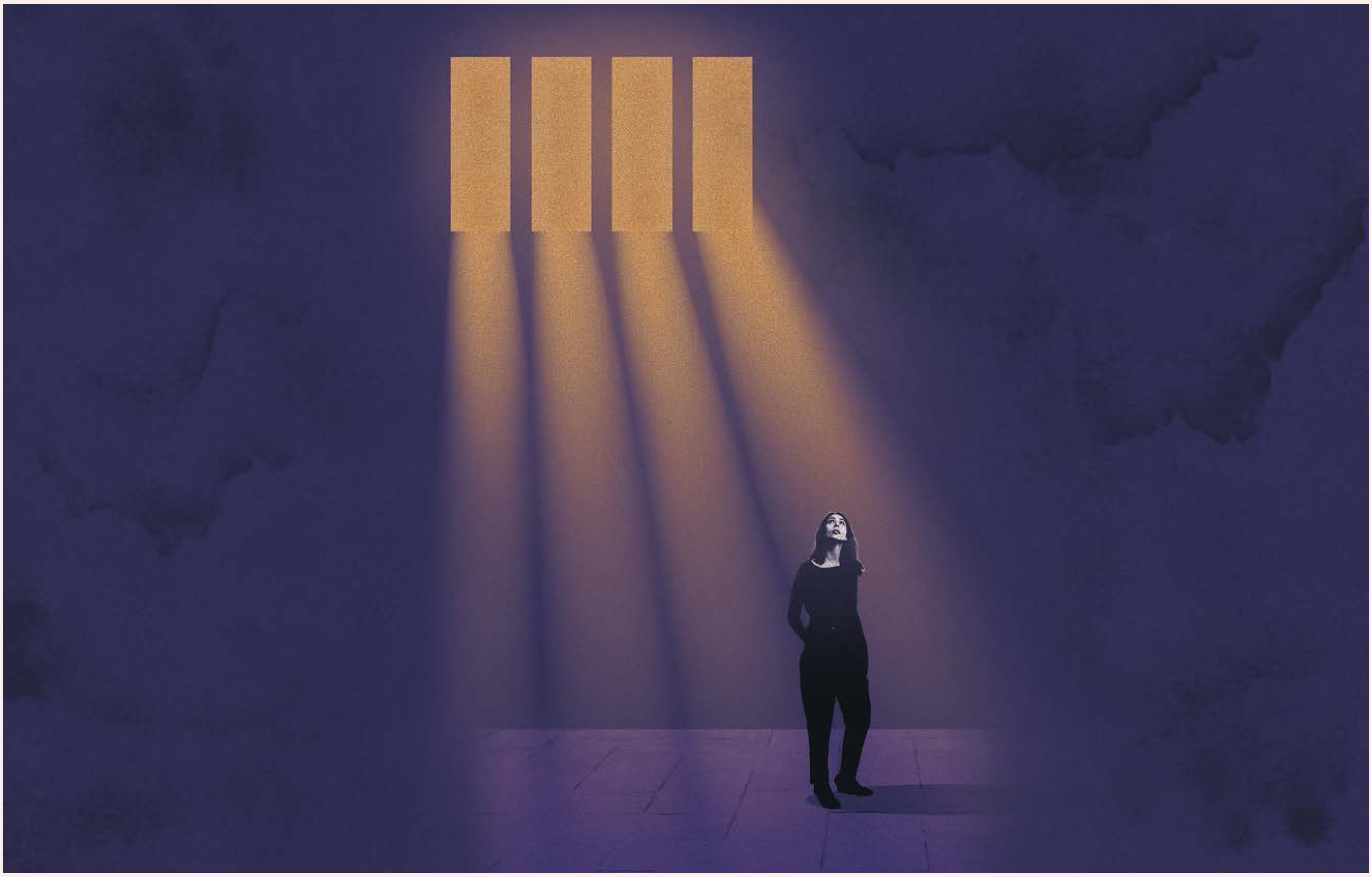


ILLUSTRATION: ALEX MELLON

Who will free our wronged and forgotten prisoners?

George Monbiot



There are those of us who exist in a more or less free society. And there are those who, while also living within the borders of the United Kingdom, exist in a police state. If the rest of us knew these people existed and what was being done to them in our name, we would scarcely believe it. No one, including Victoria Carter (an assumed name), would deny that her crimes warranted a significant prison sentence. She had come from a terrible place: a father who beat her up, an alcoholic mother whose friends sexually abused her, extreme poverty as all the money was spent on drink. As a young teenager, she ran away from home, after which she had more than 10 placements in foster care and care homes. She responded with anger, violence and self-destruction.

As a teenager, she was convicted of assault, criminal damage and burglary. She tried to kidnap a man she believed had abused her younger sister. She then went through a phase of alcoholism, during which she had sex with two underage teenagers and was convicted of sexual offences. In an alcoholic rage, she set light to photos of her mother, scorching the carpet of her lodgings and getting an arson conviction.

In 2007, in her early 20s, she was prosecuted for actual bodily harm, among other offences. Her lawyer told her to expect a sentence of up to four years. This, the judge remarked, was roughly what she would have got under different circumstances: three and a half years. But instead he handed down a sentence of "imprisonment for public protection" (IPP).

IPP sentences were introduced in England and Wales by the New Labour government as it sought to prove it was tough on law and order in the Criminal Justice Act 2003. If an offender had previously been convicted of one of 153 offences deemed to present a danger to the public, and had then committed another such crime, the courts had no choice but to impose either an IPP sentence or life imprisonment. IPP means indefinite detention. The crimes that qualified were wide-ranging. One defendant received an IPP sentence with a minimum term of just 28 days, but extended indefinitely. Another was imprisoned with a tariff of two years for stealing a bicycle. He served 12 and is now in a mental health institution.

These sentences included a "tariff": the period after which the prisoner could be assessed for release. Victoria's was 21 months. But IPP sentences carry a presumption against

Who will free our wronged and forgotten prisoners?

George Monbiot

← Continued from front

parole. Rather than the Parole Board having to prove that a prisoner presents a danger to the public, the prisoner has to prove they don't. As the then justice secretary, Kenneth Clarke, said in 2011: "It is almost impossible for the prisoner to prove that … so hardly any are released."

Those who do manage to get out face a "life licence", which cannot be reviewed for at least 10 years. The licence conditions are extremely strict.

In 2012, after widespread condemnation and a ruling by the European court of human rights that such sentences were "arbitrary and therefore unlawful", IPP terms were abolished by the Conservative government. But the measure was not retrospective. As of the end of last year, 2,892 IPP prisoners remained behind bars. Almost 97% were more than two years beyond their tariff date; nearly half were 10 years beyond. Victoria was released at the beginning of this year, after serving more than 15 years of a 21-month tariff.

The former supreme court justice Lord Brown has called IPP sentences "the greatest single stain on the justice system". When Michael Gove was justice secretary, he recommended "executive clemency" for IPP prisoners who had served terms much longer than their tariffs. But he didn't act on it. David Blunkett, the Labour home secretary who introduced the sentences, regrets them, stating: "I got it wrong. The government now has the chance to get it right."

But the government refuses to take it. In February, it rejected the recommendation of the House of Commons justice committee that remaining IPP prisoners should be resentenced. Successive justice secretaries have failed to use the power they acquired in 2012 to introduce a presumption of release. So while people who committed far worse crimes come and go, IPP prisoners are forgotten, cast into a judicial oubliette from which some might never emerge.

The effects on their mental health of never knowing when or whether they might be released can be devastating. Rates of self-harm among these prisoners are more than twice as high as among prisoners serving life sentences.

In March 2008, when she began to understand what her sentence really meant, Victoria tried to kill herself, and very nearly succeeded. But then she became determined to sort herself out. She took every available course of psychotherapy and counselling, sat GCSE exams and started an Open University degree. She knew she wasn't ready for parole when her tarriff ended. Two years later, she didn't qualify on the grounds that she was still taking a psychotherapeutic course. But after a further two years, when she came up for praole again, she had turned her life around. Unfortunately, the standards of proof required for parole were impossible to meet.

Her application was refused and she spiralled into despair. She lost three and a half stone, started self-harming and taking drugs. She attempted suicide again. She became trapped in a vicious cycle. Being refused parole causes severe mental health problems for IPP prisoners, but mental illness is one of the criteria for the refusal of parole. Instead of seeking help, some try to hide their problems from staff so as not to jeopardise their chances. Severe cuts have restricted the courses these prisoners can take, without which they have no hope of release.

Victoria is a remarkable woman: honest about what she was and what she did, acutely aware of the pain she caused, determined to lead a useful and purposeful life. But, now close to 40, she is constantly confronted by the missing years. "I deserved to be punished," she told me. "But did I deserve more than 15 years? No. I have days when I just sob in my bed. Just to get out some of the sadness of what I have lost."

A great wrong has been done. Almost everyone in power accepts it is wrong. But none are prepared to address it.

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'Comment is free... but facts are sacred' CP Scott

Immigration

Rishi Sunak has a moral duty to resist the capture of his party by xenophobia

The campaign to leave the EU promised many things, but hard agricultural labour was not among them. Seasonal fruit picking is physically demanding, poorly paid work that was, before Brexit, done mostly by migrants exercising their freedom to live in any EU member state. Ending that freedom is one of the few Brexit pledges that has been delivered. But enthusiasts for the project are dissatisfied. Net migration has not fallen. Last year it was estimated at around 500,000.

That number is inflated by exceptional cases – Ukrainian refugees and Hong Kong passport holders – but no downward trend is forecast. There is a steady inflow of workers filling vacancies in the health service, social care and other sectors. Some employers are lobbying for more generous visa allocations. Farmers still need fruit pickers. The government has acquiesced, recognising that labour shortages put pressure on supply chains, drive up inflation, risk food security and stifle economic growth. That is the Treasury view. Suella Braverman, the home secretary, is frustrated by the outbreak of pragmatic liberalism in cabinet. Earlier this week, she told a conference of radical rightwing conservatives that Britain's home-grown workforce should be mobilised in the fields.

Brexit, in that view, was supposed to help the nation wean itself off reliance on foreign workers. That proposition has resonance with people who are uncomfortable with the social changes that accompany mass migration. But the core of the argument is an economic fallacy – the "lump of labour" belief that work is a fixed commodity, and that every immigrant who finds a job in Britain is taking it away from a local worker. In reality, migrants go where there is demand for their work. They spend their wages, stimulating local economies. Immigration is generally good for growth, especially immigration of young people into a country with an ageing population. Ms Braverman's model of labour autarky is a recipe for stagnation and decline. But the home secretary is not interested in economics. Her focus is the prospect of one day replacing Rishi Sunak as Conservative leader.

Ms Braverman is positioning herself as the candidate of her party's nationalist right – a faction that was once confined to the fringe but now defines the Tory mainstream. There are few constraints on the anti-immigration rhetoric deployed to win applause from that audience. The home secretary needs no encouragement. She has already borrowed the far-right dehumanising idiom, describing refugees crossing the Channel as an "invasion". How eagerly the prime minister supports that view is unclear. He appointed Ms Braverman, and champions her policy of deporting asylum seekers to Rwanda in defiance of Britain's international human rights obligations. This week Mr Sunak defended that breach at the Council of Europe.

Asylum claims and work visas come under different rubrics of immigration policy. Mr Sunak is quietly permissive on the latter, while licensing cruelty for the former. The distinction is lost on Tory hardliners, who are stepping up the hunt for scapegoats now that Brexit has conspicuously failed to deliver. That presents the prime minister with a choice. He can resist the anti-immigration fanatics, taking the road where human decency and practical economics align. Or Mr Sunak can indulge the capture of his party by xenophobic nationalism, which would make the Tories both toxic and out of touch. Britain doesn't need more snarling populists. They have damaged the country enough.

Education

Greater Manchester can blaze a trail for vocational learning across England

Well over half of young people do not go on to university after leaving school, and our education system is letting many of them down. Further education colleges and sixth forms offering technical pathways into work have been grievously underfunded for years. New vocational qualifications, designed as an alternative to more academic GCSEs and A-levels, have been poorly understood and insufficiently valued by employers. The value and importance of apprenticeships is routinely acknowledged in Westminster; but the education select committee last month reported a steep and long-term decline in the number of under-19s actually doing one.

The net result is a shameful waste of the potential of millions of school pupils, with knock-on economic effects in terms of growth and productivity. The challenges represented by the green economy, artificial intelligence and an ageing population mean that Britain can ill afford to neglect the formation and prospects of the majority of its future workforce. But a reset is required to restore status, value and resources to non-university routes to employment.

To that end, the government should carefully consider proposals unveiled yesterday by the mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham. Building on new "trailblazer" devolution , Mr Burnham wishes to introduce a new Manchester baccalaureate (Mbacc) for 14- to 16-year-olds, offering a vocational alternative to the existing English baccalaureate (Ebacc). Almost two-thirds of 16-year-olds in Greater Manchester either do not pursue or do not achieve an Ebacc, which comprises a suite of academic subjects and acts as a gateway to A-levels and university. The Mbacc would group together different options, ranging from engineering to the creative arts, combined with core study of English, maths and digital technology.

Mr Burnham's idea is partly a rebranding exercise, but that should be seen as one of its strengths. In 2016, the Sainsbury review identified a pressing need in technical education for "a well-understood national system of qualifications that works in the marketplace". Decades of ad hoc and muddled reforms imposed by Whitehall have failed to deliver buy-in both from students and employers. Backed with sufficient political capital, and developed in conjunction with regional employers, the Mbacc could help generate a new prestige for skills-based learning and respond directly to local industry needs. A majority of students would be expected to progress to higher technical qualifications and have access to guaranteed apprenticeships in Greater Manchester.

Much of the detail will need to be clarified between now and September 2024, when Mr Burnham hopes to launch the Mbacc in schools. It is important, for example, that children are enabled to keep their options open at school for as long as possible. But the thrust of these plans, and above all the commitment to restoring a parity of esteem between academic and vocational routes, is in the right direction.

A great deal of energy and creativity has rightly been devoted to widening university access. More of the same is now needed elsewhere in the system, to give the best possible platform to those who choose not to do a degree. The Cinderella status of FE colleges has been symptomatic of a broader political mindset that has undervalued, underresourced and underpromoted skills-based training. Greater Manchester's proposals can be part of a new template to put that right.



Keir Starmer speaking to the British Chambers of Commerce yesterday
PHOTOGRAPH: JORDAN PETTIT/PA

Starmer does have a vision – and it's not New Labour 2.0

Martin Kettle



For some, any idea that Keir Starmer and audacity are words that can sit comfortably in the same sentence will seem nonsensical. To many who define themselves as Labour supporters, the most salient characteristic of the opposition leader is not his audacity but its opposite, timidity. In this critique, Starmer's strategy, if he really has one, is to do as little as possible to offend the voters, and wait for the Conservatives to eject themselves from government by their own divisions and incompetence rather than to drive them from it.

Seen thus, the English local elections of 2023 were quickly interpreted as an object warning on the limits of this supposed approach. The Conservative vote share on 4 May was predictably down after the negligence and bloodletting of 2022. Labour's lead, though, was more modest, so the spoils were shared with the Liberal Democrats and Greens. After the voting, a Labour landslide no longer beckoned as brightly. Instead, the future seems more likely to offer a hung parliament and talk of coalition deals.

This scenario certainly cannot be ruled out. But it is absolutely not Starmer's own strategy, which is for Labour to win outright. Starmer's advisers do not believe the local elections were disappointing. They think they are very much on course, and have read the results much more positively than the Starmer sceptics. This partly explains why the party hierarchy was so agitated about the media's instant focus on hung parliaments and coalition possibilities.

At the core of this more favourable reading to Starmer is the fact that Labour did noticeably better this month in areas that voted leave in the 2016 Brexit referendum, many of which (the so-called red wall) Labour lost to the Tories in 2019. By comparison, this month's results were less striking in areas that voted remain, where the Labour (and Lib Dem) vote was already fairly strong. The inferences are twofold: that Labour is now doing best where it matters most, and that Brexit is no longer defining the electoral map.

For example, there was a seven-point swing to Labour a fortnight ago in areas won by the Tories in 2019. This compares with a swing of just under three points in areas won by Labour in the same year. Another finding is that Labour also did best this month in areas of England with fewest university graduates, where it netted a six-point swing. In places with more graduates, the swing was only three points.

> **He is very deliberately trying to turn towards, engage with and speak for the concerns of working-class voters**

If it is sustained, this disproportionate shift to Labour among working-class voters has the potential to be significant in two ways. The first is that it puts more Conservative seats within reach for Labour. The second is that it points towards Labour reuniting its working-class and middle-class tribes after the fissures caused by Brexit and Jeremy Corbyn.

Each of these is a central strategic aim for Starmer, and each needs to be properly understood. Starmer's course has been consistently set towards winning an outright Commons majority in 2024. When he was elected leader, he never settled for the two-term recovery many assumed he would need after the hammering Labour received at the 2019 election. Equally important is that the progressive prospectus he intends to offer is a national one, based on reunifying the class base of the Labour electorate rather than accepting its irresistible divergence into a delta of different political parties and traditions.

To state these things is neither to endorse the approach nor to dismiss it. But it is to emphasise that this is indeed Starmer's aim, and that it is remarkably bold. It flies in the face of a considerable amount of conventional wisdom about 21st-century British electoral behaviour. To aim at winning an overall majority in one term, after Labour was reduced to its lowest seats total since 1935, is itself audacious. To seek to do it on the basis that Labour can again be a national party in geographical and class terms, deserves that description even more.

Starmer's view puts him at odds with one of the most widespread assumptions on the European centre-left. It challenges the view that the dominant progressive parties of the industrial era must accommodate themselves to operating within a more pluralist party system and amid the looser class loyalties of the new millennium. Instead, it says that such segmentation is neither inevitable nor even desirable, providing that the party remains a broad church and avoids foolish accommodations with the activist left.

But it is certainly not New Labour 2.0 either, and calling it so does not make it so. Indeed the Starmer strategy of focusing on working-class support is at odds with one of New Labour's most central tenets. Tony Blair and Gordon Brown believed that Labour would prosper in the modern era only by reducing its dependence on working-class voters and the unions and by becoming a middle-class, progressive party, like the US Democrats. Starmer is very deliberately trying to turn towards working-class voters, and to engage with and speak for their concerns.

This is quite a traditional, almost old-fashioned, view of Labour's role. Starmer's aspiration to make Labour a national and social democratic party again is one that Clement Attlee or Harold Wilson would have understood. In the vastly changed economic and political circumstances of the 2020s, it is hard to find a more appropriate word than audacious for this attempt to reforge the sword that was broken. The key, obviously enough, is whether it succeeds.



Phoneless in a playground, I'm oddly content

Emma Brockes



It is a truism of parenting that it goes so fast, but as anyone who has been forced to sit on a bench and watch their children run tireless circuits of the playground knows, sometimes it goes so slowly you feel as if you're losing your mind. I know people who will do anything to avoid playground duty, will beg their friends to coordinate so they don't have to do it alone, or will discreetly wear headphones throughout so that, while maintaining eyes on their children, they can listen to a podcast and be entirely mentally absent.

As the weather heats up and we crawl out of our screen-dependent winters, New York playgrounds are alive with the shriek of, "Joshua, 10 minutes!" I have fought with the Joshua-10-minutes tendency for years. The urge to cut short the visit came on strongest when my children were smaller and could still be a danger to themselves.

Somehow the combination of mindless repetition (on the slide, on the swings) and the need for hypervigilance in case someone fell off something induced a state of almost exquisite boredom that I occasionally think has an equivalence in, for example, bag checkers at the airport: the job is monotonous in the extreme but the consequences of not doing it properly can be dire.

That particular dynamic has changed over the years as the requirements for my involvement have evolved. These days, long periods will pass in which nothing is required of me at all, punctuated by the occasional request - "Watch this! That wasn't it; that wasn't it either" - that I check in to witness someone doing a cartwheel.

If I wanted to, I could disappear into back-to-back episodes of my current podcast obsessions, You're Wrong About and This Is Actually Happening, and at the beginning of this spring, I did. The experience felt simultaneously like an amazing win and vaguely like cheating. To be present/not present when you're cleaning the house is one thing; yet to mentally absent oneself from one's kids - to be always projecting forwards in anticipation of this particular moment being over - has started to feel like missing the point.

I should add that, in general, and when it doesn't involve swings, I am very good at doing nothing. I could sit looking at the wood grain on a table for a long time and be more or less content. There is copious literature on the necessity of boredom for children, mostly mentioned these days in the context of warnings about overscheduling and screens.

There is less about the usefulness of "boredom" for adults, and what there is tends to be found in the literature of time-maximisation, where boredom is often framed as an aid to creativity or achievement.

In and of themselves, these idle periods have no apparent value. But increasingly they strike me as the solid matter of life and the moments I'll look back on with the deepest nostalgia.

I've been having this sense for a few years now, but it's pathetic that what has sharpened my revelation is the experience, twice in a row, of accidentally going out without my phone.

After the panic subsided, I sat in the sunshine while my children rode their bikes up and down and then ditched them to play in the sand. I watched a barge make its way up the Hudson. I pointed out two sparrows enjoying a sand bath. (What even is that?)

I could have been listening to the real-life story of a woman who survived a home invasion, but instead I eavesdropped on some young people playing volleyball farther up the sand. I felt very happy that I was neither young nor under any obligation to play volleyball. When the reflex urge to shout "Guys, 10 minutes!" surfaced - because, realistically, how long can I be expected to just sit here? - I did the wildest thing and resisted it. "Don't bring your phone," they both say now when we go out.

There are limits to this lassitude, which the other day nearly caused us to miss the last ferry off Governors Island. And I do occasionally worry that, taken to an extreme, I will one day relax into a formless blob of inactivity that I will never fully be able to pull out of.

The funny thing is that of the two experiences of boredom, fighting it was the one that delivered the greatest sense of dead time, of passively waiting for something to end. The other - phoneless, rooted in minor-league bird watching - felt as active and urgent as only the best use of one's time can.

The long read

Loadsarubbish

Essex has seen many a beloved beauty spot swallowed by landfill in the last 50 years. Now some of these dumps are disgorging that detritus back into the Thames. What have we done? By *Tim Burrows*



The long read

In 1971, the Angling Times sent reporter Dave Nash to document a disaster in Ockendon, Essex. The resulting article described the extinction of a local beauty spot, hundreds of hectares of open space where former gravel pits had become popular fishing lakes. "In less than a decade, what was one of the best fisheries in Essex has been savagely raped and despoiled. Seven hundred tons of household garbage is deposited into the pits every day, along with a similar undisclosed amount of industrial refuse." The article was accompanied by a striking picture, taken by Nash, showing two men attempting to catch a pike between the scrap cars that lined the bank of Arisdale lake. "If it's not the water level dropping," said Jerry Hulbert, the vice-president of the Moor Hall and Belhus Angling Society, "then it's the rubbish encroaching a few feet every day."

I came across this story via my father-in-law, Cliff Hatton, who had sent me the newspaper cutting in the post. He would often tell me how the gravel pits of South Ockendon - initially dug out by the Ham River Grit company to feed the post-second world war hunger for concrete in south-east England - became, in his own excited words, "a nirvana" once they had naturally filled with water. "You dig a hole in Thurrock, leave it a few years and there are fish in it."

The faintly absurd happenstance of the pits felt to me like a classic Essex story. My birth county had long made the best out of whatever the modern world threw at it, from industrial growth along the Thames to postwar new towns, becoming a shorthand for a loutish brand of greed-is-good Conservatism in the 1980s, and spray-tanned reality stars in the 2010s.

Like many former Londoners looking for green space, Cliff's family had moved to South Ockendon in 1964, when Cliff was 11. He and his older brother Barry were keen fishers, and had enrolled in the local angling society. They rejoiced at the abundance of water they could dip their lines into. Cliff was a big fan of local heroes the Small Faces and the music of the burgeoning 1960s mod scene, which was filling Mecca ballrooms with R&B and soul from Forest Gate on the edge of London to Clacton on the coast. But it wasn't music that kept him up all night. While his peers might have been trying their luck with a potential squeeze in the dark corner of a parquet-floored hall, he was sitting under the moonlight with a rod, eager to catch a handsome carp, perch or bream.

Cliff said one of the pits, known as Hamble Lane, had, like an increasing number of places in south Essex, become an established rubbish tip by the time they started fishing there. But, while fishing at night, he noticed something odd. "There was more activity at the site during the hours of darkness than there was during the hours of light, even though everybody should by law have been gone," Cliff said. Lorries would come through the gates "nose-to-tail" with sometimes up to 14 in a convoy, all through the night until sunrise. It was only later he realised the extent of the industrial chemicals that were being dumped there under cover of darkness.

One day in 1967, an elderly neighbour had asked Cliff to bring back some sticks from the Hamble Lane dump that he could use in his rose garden. Cliff remembered his errand when he was on the way back from fishing, after the sun had gone down. He climbed on top of a pile of wood to search for sticks, and then jumped off. "I just leapt into the darkness thinking I was going to land on solid ground," said Cliff. Instead, he found himself up to his waist in slime. After a few moments, his skin began to burn. He had jumped into a caustic slurry, dumped there by a pharmaceutical company based in Dagenham. "That led to me spending a week or so in hospital and many, many weeks after that invalided indoors with great burns to my legs and on my face," said Cliff.

Cliff's parents, knowing their place, never sought compensation. Once recovered enough to return to the pits, Cliff found two half-empty drums of granulated cyanide floating in one of them. Another time, he and his brother came across a mountain of glass vials, and suspected that barbiturates had been dumped a few yards from a school fence. "We took some samples to the police, and showed them these dangerous drugs and mentioned they were within yards of the school playing field, and the only question we were asked was: 'What were you doing over there?' They were more worried about the fact that we were trespassing."

Thurrock council took no action over the scandalous pollution that burned him and destroyed the habitat he so cherished, leaving Cliff with "a lifelong grudge against authority". Decades later, he still winced at the thought of the fish floundering about in poisoned water as the pits were drained and the whole reserve became a landfill site; those that hadn't already perished were buried alive under tonnes of industrial waste.

"And of course with them went all the voles and the birdlife, including kingfishers and bitterns." Each time Cliff told me of his favourite fishing spot, the Ripples, it was as if he could see it before him anew. "It was dubbed the Ripples because when the wind blew on it and the sun shone on it, it was such a beautiful looking place. It sparkled. It was a paradise and it just went under a sea of filth."

I wanted to delve further into Essex's tales of dumping, so I went to visit a couple of historic landfill sites in East Tilbury on the Thames coastline at Thurrock, at the invitation of Prof Kate Spencer, an environmental geochemist at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). Spencer has dedicated more than a decade to studying the threat of coastal landfill, concentrating much of her research in south Essex. There are about 50 historic landfill sites in the Thames estuary area (out of 1,215 around England's coast), but of the Essex sites, only Thurrock is eroding: a large bank of rubbish, supposedly safely buried, now spilling its guts on to the beach and into the Thames at an alarming rate.

As we walked along the beach at the edge of a decommissioned landfill site, the waste-strewn shoreline seemed to carry on for ever, with sheets of asbestos lying over bottle caps and shards of glass softened by the attention of the tides. Cascades of ragged plastic in off-white, black and grey had been spewed out of the bank of earth, a layer cake of soil and rubbish, with plastic mingling in the thickets of brambles and green vegetation to become almost indistinguishable from it. Almost.

Previous page: Pitsea landfill in Essex ALAMY



Some of the landfill sites along the River Thames in Essex GUARDIAN GRAPHICS

Spencer and QMUL have analysed materials at this site and others in Essex and the Thames estuary and around the country. "It's definitely contaminated," she said. Once the landfills are full, they are capped with a layer of earth, but levels of contamination "would breach human health guidelines". Proponents of capping have long promised that it would be the end of the problem, but Spencer is compelled to keep reminding people that, oh no, it isn't.

She pointed to the different potential sources of toxicity just lying around on the beach. Old car batteries leaking cadmium. Bottles of medicine. Domestic waste, commercial waste, including many, many different types of fabric, which Spencer suspected had been chucked away by east London textile companies. For ages, she said, there was a big clod of fabric that had long ago been shredded and was coming out of the earth along with little pink cotton reels.

Spencer started her journey by analysing the toxicity of these kinds of landfill sites and their effect on the surrounding salt marsh habitats at a site on the Medway estuary, on the other side of the Thames. She took a riverbed sample that captures the depth of different layers, preserving the sequence of the deposits. This helped her dig into the records of historical pollution. The result was a kind of palimpsest of London's industrial boom. "You are going back down into history and you can see how the quality of the river changed. The Thames was polluted noticeably from the 1820s and 1830s and it reached a big peak in the late 1800s. You can imagine, the Industrial Revolution, lead smelting, and all that kind of thing. Then mid-20th century, post-second world war, in big cities like London there would be a huge population growth, [more] industrial growth. You can see the water quality deteriorate, and that is recorded in the sediment."

In one way or another, the story of Essex is a story of a great population swell in the county's southern reaches, in part as the county has long fulfilled a role as a repository for the people (and their waste) that London doesn't have the space for. In 2015, during excavations at Liverpool Street station, 3,300 skeletons were discovered at the site of the old Bedlam psychiatric hospital. There was no room left in London's cemeteries, and so they were commuted to Canvey Island, east of Tilbury on the Thames estuary.

Spencer said it would have been a really easy decision to send rubbish from London to the Thurrock tip: "Put it on a barge, ship it down here." In the 19th century, east London authorities or vestries such as Mile End bought up land in Essex with the intention of using it to bury their rubbish. As Lee Jackson recounts in his history of the filthy capital, Dirty Old London, a London county council official in the late 1800s described the reason for using Essex as a place to dump waste: "The natural solution is to shoot it in some sparsely inhabited district, where public opinion is not strong enough to effectually resent it being deposited."

The erosion of landfill into estuaries is not a problem exclusive to Essex. It's just that Essex happens to be next to the UK's capital, and so its landfills tend to be super-sized. Mucking Marsh in Thurrock was one of the largest landfills in western Europe, taking on 660,000 tonnes of rubbish from the dustbins of London each year, brought downriver on barges every day before dawn. "It could be seen from space," said Graham Harwood, a Goldsmiths academic and artist based in Leigh-on-Sea. He and his wife, Matsuko Yokokoji, run the art initiative YoHa, whose work delves into the Essex estuary's hidden and sometimes malignant past.

An academic he may be, but after decades on the Essex coast, Harwoood has acquired the slightly grizzly air of the seafarer. He told me he was interested in "the philosophy of waste". Despite the horror they can inspire, dumps had a "magical quality" to them, he said. A sort of 21st-century sublime. He wanted to see public assemblies between local politicians, young people, activists and retired tip-workers, who know what kinds of toxicity are buried in the landfills.



He wanted to set up "dialogues about the haunting of waste in the future. Think, the worst has already happened, so what can we do with this."

For Harwood, key to understanding the Essex marshes is the concept of "wasteland", which is central to the county's place in the world. He told me that when Europeans first went to the Americas and found land no one was farming, it was called wasteland. "This idea of waste is so kind of fixed in our culture, and it's so embedded in colonialism as well. And so you can see the way that London has used Essex as a kind of colony … sending out vast tracts of shit."

Pitsea was an old Victorian marshland tip off the A13 near Basildon, where no one ever knew exactly what was being dumped. One of the former tip-workers I met told me it was later discovered that the soil in some of the places he worked was contaminated with "arsenic, strychnine, who knows what". In 1975 a lorry driver, Thomas Carroll, died after inhaling lethal hydrogen sulphide fumes given off by two toxic loads dumped in Pitsea. Reporting on the story, the Daily Mirror called Pitsea "the bin of Britain".

Spencer said the process of dumping and capping reminded her of her grandmother who, when she got dementia, started to hide things that upset her, like old clothes or dirty dishes, putting cushions over them or placing them in cupboards. Until around the 1970s, Spencer said, dumping legislation was thin on the ground, with few records of what was being dumped and where. "The idea was, this is the end of the road for the rubbish," said Spencer. 'We have put it in a hole in the ground, covered it up and that problem has now gone away. But we now realise we haven't put it away. We've just been storing the problem."

Earlier, as we walked downhill from the station to the East Tilbury landfills, Spencer had stopped to show me the stark geological differences created by rubbish. We gazed south-west towards a stretch of coastal landfill known as Bottle Beach. Spencer pointed out a long strip of land that was much higher than the marsh. "That landscape shouldn't look like that," she said. "If you'd gone back 150 years, we would have just been looking at a flat marsh. It should have been completely flat." Spencer said if you drive out of London on the A13, as you head east, you should be able to see the river, as you are driving along the floodplain. "But you can't. You're seeing a whole landscape of landfill."

A bank of rubbish, supposedly safely buried, is now spilling its guts on to the beach and into the Thames at an alarming rate

A former landfill site in East Tilbury eroding into the River Thames

JILL MEAD/ THE GUARDIAN

For me, the marshes of Essex feel akin to its soul. When I think of home, the first things I picture are these plains of spongy vegetation that could seem menacing in the right light, with reeds and samphire sprouting from a dark, glistening mud, where wading migrant birds stalk on the lookout for food. Grassy sea walls. Reclaimed munitions dumps. Flat fields with pillboxes and all that mud. A terrain sliced by creeks, accented by sluices and characterised by a great gloop that can remind folk that they are never far from the primordial.

And yet, the ambiguity and unstable nature of once-malarial marshlands led to their ruin. On a family picnic one beautiful and hot spring day on Two Tree Island, a nature reserve at the edge of the Thames estuary, my three-year-old daughter, Greta, kept asking "What's that?" whenever she spotted the thick brown bottoms of beer bottles, 1980s Tesco bags or old shoes - so many shoes - protruding out of the dry ground. It was a surreal detail from a pleasant trip that I might once have laughed off, but now, accompanied by my children, it felt like a bad dream.

In some places, however, the matter that London no longer wanted has been used in productive and creative ways. An artificial hill in an old metropolitan Essex area of east London, formed from a huge heap of toxic spoil dumped by the old gas works, has been known for years as the Beckton Alp. Its most imaginative use was as a dry ski slope, opened in 1989 by Diana, Princess of Wales.

The RSPB used more than 3m tonnes of material excavated from Crossrail's tunnel digs to raise part of Wallasea Island at the mouth of the Thames by an average of 1.5 metres, transforming farmland into a coastal marshland haven for egrets and oystercatchers and creating lagoons across 670 hectares.

Mucking Marsh was named a site of special scientific interest in 1991, owing to the populations of shelduck, grey plover, dunlin, black-tailed godwit and redshank that roosted on the salt marsh, and the abundance of vegetation such as sea aster, not to mention rare spiders, but it continued to be used for rubbish disposal until 2012. (A third of all coastal historical landfills are located near designated ecological sites.) Mucking's conversion into a nature reserve, which was opened by David Attenborough in 2013, was partly financed by almost £3m in funds from DP World, the Dubai-owned company that built the London Gateway port nearby, and Enovert, a waste management company that used to use the site for dumping. The site at Pitsea is earmarked to be transformed by the RSPB in the next decade.

Further east, the landfill site at Two Tree Island in Leigh-on-Sea was converted back into public land in the 1970s. Now blackberries,

The long read



apples, pears, plums and cherries all grow here. People come to swim at Leigh, where there are also wild food foraging clubs. A local chef, John Lawson, has written about how his love for foraging was ignited by sourcing samphire fresh from Two Tree Island. But Spencer was alarmed by environmental reports for Two Tree Island that identified cyanide on the site. She didn't even want to take samples back to the lab.

In 2017, Spencer wrote a report with her colleague at QMUL, Dr James H Brand, on the risk of pollution from historic coastal sites at risk of flooding or erosion for the Environment Agency, based on research into Leigh Marsh, used as a site for dumping between 1955 and 1967, and Hadleigh Marsh, which was active during the 1980s. They analysed waste and soil-like material from the landfill. Some of the samples were found to have lead concentrations more than 12 times the recommended level for good ecological health.

Leaching of chemicals and other harmful substances from landfill is liable to increase with sea level rise. But it isn't just coastal erosion that is breaching the deposits of trash. It is the effects of curiosity, too. Bottle Beach is popular with the mudlarking community, a burgeoning group of amateur historians and curious walkers who come and dig through the rubbish, burrowing holes into the scrub to find trinkets. We came across old 20th-century booze and medicine bottles in lines, as if they had been filed for consideration by a digger but didn't make the final cut. There were certain people Spencer saw regularly "sitting in a toxic hole" eating sandwiches after digging like a mole into heavily contaminated earth with no gloves on. "'Well, I'm fine,' they'd say. 'I've been doing it since I was a kid.' But then asbestos takes 40 years to take hold."

The rubbishscapes of south Essex entwine with memories the same way microplastics leaching out of landfill are said to have done with the fibres of our bodies. When my wife's grandfather died, his funeral was at Bowers Gifford, one of the highest points of south Essex. As I followed the hearse into the crematorium, the enormous capped mound of rubbish at Pitsea came into view. Most people glide past these vistas on the train without a second glance, but I began to obsess about them. On the train out to meet Spencer, I had marvelled at the Pitsea horizon, a nonsensical Thames estuary hillside towering over the mudflats, a Brecon Beacon of waste. Coming to places like Tilbury and Mucking made me feel as if I was very much living in the Age of Consequences.

Coming to places like Tilbury and Mucking made me feel as if I was very much living in the Age of Consequences

After 10 years looking at the landfill problem, Spencer couldn't see many obvious or workable answers. "The solution seems to be: 'Don't worry about it until something happens.' It's shameful. And there's a moral issue - it's no different to throwing your rubbish out of your car window. Your car's clean … "

The issue is slowly picking up traction in the places that count, but with the emphasis on "slowly". Spencer was on an expert witness panel for a UN rapporteur in 2017, a report into the impacts of toxic waste in human health in the UK, but five years on she said she is still waiting for the UK government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to develop a clear strategy to assess the impact of these sites.

One of the big things that has changed in recent years is that marsh landscapes are now valued. The Thames estuary and many other Essex marshes are protected wetland sites, and could even soon become Unesco world heritage sites. Marshes store carbon, purify water, provide valuable habitat and act as a natural buffer against coastal erosion. The Environment Agency would like to turn some of the farmland adjacent to the former East Tilbury landfill site back into salt marsh to provide habitats for wildlife and storage for flood waters with sea levels rising, but the presence of waste is complicating those plans.

I headed back to East Tilbury station, passing the unusually high banks of rubbish one last time, and pondered that if the county's brash, Thatcherite caricature "loadsamoney" was the front, then its waste mountains were the back. If Essex marshes were once seen as out-of-the-way places that you could quite easily get away with dumping in, it now fell to far-off countries such as Malaysia to receive our waste. The postwar boom in consumer goods in the late 20th century resulted in enormous amounts of household waste, and we will all leave our own hill of trash. In making visible this hidden toxic legacy, coastal erosion, while potentially tragic, could have a positive effect. After decades of using Essex as a dumping ground, people can finally see the scale of the challenge. ●

This is an edited extract of The Invention of Essex: The Making of an English County, published on 1 June by Profile Books and available to order at guardianbookshop.com



Above: Bottle Beach in Essex; below: a 1971 Angling Times article about a despoiled fishing lake

JILL MEAD/THE GUARDIAN; DAVID NASH/ANGLING TIMES

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Letters

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Established 1906

Country diary

Caradon Hill, Bodmin Moor

Below Caradon Hill, the fresh, diaphanous leaves of tall beeches hide Tokenbury Manor, and a green panorama extends across the Lynher Valley towards Kit Hill (near home) and beyond, to the skyline of misty Dartmoor.

Patches of sunlight gleam across this predominantly pastoral land with rare enclaves of lurid oilseed rape, and fewer fields of plastic-covered maize than in previous years. Lambs and their attendant ewes scatter across the hill's stony rough grazing; bracken emerges through last year's flattened brown fronds, and turf flushes pale green. Gnarled gorse trees dazzle with yellow flowers and lichen-draped thorns will soon burst into bloom.

Encircling the hill, a path follows an old railway, part of a sinuous network that, in the 19th century, carried ore and granite downhill towards Moorswater near Liskeard and then onwards by canal, superseded by a railway, to Looe harbour. On this cool, hazy May morning, a cuckoo - the first of the year - sounds from higher up the open hill; following family tradition we run about to ensure another year of liveliness!

Then, around a bend, we hear that rare call again, carrying uphill from the overgrown Marke Valley (once intensively mined and linked to this railway); northwards is the wooded top of outlying Notter Tor and the stark rocks of Sharp Tor. Then comes the village of Minions (almost 1,000ft above sea level) set in this world heritage mining landscape, close to the prehistoric stone circles of the Hurlers and overlooked by the Cheesewring.

Southward, granite sleepers, once fixed with rails, mark the way into Gonamena Valley; on either side of the little stream (source of the River Seaton) are tower dumps of waste, excavated from South Caradon mine, producing copper ore until closure in 1885 - no sound or sight now of the clanking machinery, steam engines and crowds of surface workers breaking and washing the ore.

Birds sing within leafy thickets of willow, thorn and brilliant gorse growing across the hummocky bottom. Ruinous chimneys and engine houses protrude through regenerating trees and, from the canopy of oak catkins, comes the mellifluous song of willow warblers.
Virginia Spiers

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Labour can offer hope by confronting Brexit

Alastair Campbell's incisive analysis of Brexit (Labour and the Lib Dems must start calling out the Brexit mess, 12 May) provides some much needed hope to many, perhaps especially to the younger generation, who would overwhelmingly vote to rejoin the EU if there were another referendum. After the Boris Johnson era of false promises, the least the electorate deserves is for Brexit to be confronted directly and honestly.

There is no doubt that a Keir Starmer-led Labour government would improve the UK's relationship with the EU and negotiate solutions to problems such as the urgent need to restore membership of the Horizon programme. However, such actions, although worthwhile, would not reverse the massive negative economic impact of being outside the single market.

The fundamental issue that the UK's political leadership needs to address is that the longer we stay outside the single market, the longer our economic potential is seriously curtailed.
David Newens
Milton Keynes

● Alastair Campbell is wrong when he says: "Brexit was a decision made by one generation, in response to a campaign led by a now utterly discredited prime minister, Boris Johnson. The younger generations whose future has in so many ways been spoiled ... have every right to fight to have the decision revisited." The decision was made by people of all generations who chose to believe the lies, and also by the thousands who failed to vote. Please stop trying to blame the older generation for the mess we find ourselves in.
Marilynne Gardiner
Blackwater, Hampshire

● I endorse Alastair Campbell's view that Labour has no choice but to address the farrago of Brexit. My only confusion is his claim that Labour was impelled to collude in Boris Johnson's escape trick at the end of 2019 and agree to an early election. It was this that allowed Johnson to wriggle free of the closing political jaws that would have trapped him into a second referendum.
Glyn Ford
Oldham, Greater Manchester

● Even as a remainer, you know you've lived too long when you read Alastair Campbell criticising the "gaslighting propaganda" of Brexiters. To regain a sense of proportion, leaving the EU may damage lives and livelihoods a little less than the invasion of Iraq.
Graham Mort
Carnforth, Lancashire

● Alastair Campbell doubts that "sorting out the Brexit mess, let alone rejoining the EU" is likely to happen soon, "or that it will be easy". Not necessarily, were the UK government to remind itself that the fundamental reason for the EU's creation was to put an end to centuries of war across Europe. This was to be achieved by closely integrating member states' economies, so that for any one country to even rattle a sabre would be economic, social and even environmental suicide.

That objective was accomplished, because for over 60 years it went to plan. That is, until we decided to secede from the EU. That decision has fractured European economic integration and thereby ruptured European security.

Securing our readmission to the EU would be the single most important measure parliament could take to best ensure lasting peace within Europe. The EU would welcome us with open arms.
Neil Hornsby
Inverness

Scots have the right idea about roaming

It is sad to read that right to roam only applies to 8% of land in England (Right to roam: access to nature in England is far from equal, study finds, 13 May). No wonder Westminster politicians will be debating this huge barrier to the enjoyment of nature on 18 May. Why is such access so limited in England when the opposite is true in Scotland? Here, public access rights apply to most land and water, even around our own densely populated cities, so long as we follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Today's Westminster politicians need to come north and learn about access to nature. The annual prime ministerial visit to Balmoral provides the perfect opportunity. King Charles can demonstrate how rights of public access apply to most land and water on the Balmoral estate and in the surrounding hills, woods and fields, whether on foot, bike or horseback. If the king and any member of the public can exercise right to roam in this way, then the prime minister should return south with a determination to deliver equal rights of access to nature for all citizens. England deserves no less.
Dave Morris
Kinnesswood, Kinross

● The distribution of Labour and Tory MPs follows lines of Labour success in urban areas and Conservative in rural. It should be no surprise, therefore, that it is Conservative constituencies that have any land to roam on at all.

While the report does not detail what green space is counted in cities, where I live in Manchester the council has a policy for how much green space there should be by population, a useful measure in planning, vindicated by the pandemic. A more egalitarian way of quantifying right to roam would be what percentage of green space is available to roam in each constituency, otherwise it would appear that having a large piece of the pie only means you have to share less of it.
Laura Collier
Manchester

How to make our public spaces safe again

Tracy Brabin (By our own design: this is how we can make Britain's parks safe for women, theguardian.com, 13 May) highlights the problems experienced by women in public spaces; but these places should be safe for everyone.

Children, young men and elderly people are almost, if not as much, at risk. Tracy talks about better lighting and "escape routes", neither of which would be helpful if there was no one around to respond. Once upon a time there were park keepers - famously feared by miscreants - but the holy grail of saving public money has resulted in seriously reduced funding for such roles and for community policing. So, instead, we have to pick up the tab for the damage done by rape, assault and murder.

This is an issue for our streets as well as our green spaces. Start with serious investment in building strong communities, educating all young people to care, respect and look out for each other - and provide families with safe homes and safe areas in which to live.

Make journeys to school and recreation safe. Work to get knife and drug crime eliminated. These are massive tasks because of the steady erosion in resources for health, education and social structures. But if we don't start now, then the issues that Tracy raises will become even more just a drop in the ocean.
Cynthia Roberts
Alderney, Guernsey

Corrections and clarifications

● **The Rolling Stones' Brian Jones was 27 when he died, not 26 as we said in a TV review (The dark side of sex and drugs and rock'n'roll, 16 May, G2, p10). Also, this piece was written by Stuart Jeffries, not Lucy Mangan as the picture byline indicated.**

● **An image of the musician Róisín Murphy that was used on page 1 of the newspaper and the G2 cover omitted to credit the photographer, Nik Pate (12 May).**

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com or The readers' editor, **Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU.** You can also leave a voicemail on **020 3353 4736**

Storage unit helped get rid of abusive ex

After decades of domestic abuse, I finally got my ex-husband out of the house. I never wanted to see him again. So I put all his remaining possessions into a storage unit, paid for one month and took the key to his solicitor. I love storage units (Housing crisis and consumerism drive £1bn-a-year self-storage boom, 17 May).
Name and address supplied

● As ministers consider putting facial recognition on the police's body-worn cameras (Report, 17 May), why don't they go the whole hog and connect them to a chatbot? Enter a few key words or phrases and you have the offence identified and charge sheet written. Huge saving in time and paperwork.
Iain Windeatt
Oldham, Greater Manchester

● Marina Hyde looms large in the many reasons I read the Guardian, but I was flummoxed by her piece on ITV's This Morning, which I have never seen (Journal, 17 May). I have heard of Phil, though I'm not sure how, but I've no idea who Holly is. This is because I don't watch TV in the morning - I read my paper then. Am I missing something?
Tony Rowlands
Bristol

● A friend used to have a cat she named Darling, to enjoy calling him back in at night (Letters, 17 May). She's a Guardian letter writer, so I'm amused that she hasn't yet joined in with this line of correspondence. Still embarrassed, Judy?
Sally Cheseldine
Balerno, Edinburgh

● One of the repeated dance instructions at my FitSteps class is: "Toe, toe, heel. Toe, toe, heel." Makes me think that Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz is calling her dog.
Pam Fraser
Cumnor, Oxfordshire

Obituaries



Němcová in 2000. She and her husband fled to Austria in 1968 after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia but decided to return

PHOTOGRAPH: ONDŘEJ NĚMEC

Dana Němcová

Czech dissident who fought for human rights in the Soviet crackdown after the Prague spring

In her inspiring 2021 autobiography, No Matter What Happens, You Have Nothing to Fear, the Czech psychologist Dana Němcová, who has died aged 89, tells of a turning point in her life. Shortly after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, she and her husband, Jiří Němec, and their seven children fled to Austria, where they sought temporary asylum.

When it became clear that the wave of arrests they had expected had not happened, Jiří, a psychologist, philosopher, and a prominent Catholic intellectual, felt he should go back to Prague and continue the work he had begun to help extricate the church from tight state control. Dana had her doubts. "I did not want to bring up my children in an occupied country where people would be forced to speak and behave against their own convictions," she said.

Jiří's arguments prevailed. Had they remained in exile, Dana's long life of service to others - as a dissident, a defender of human rights, a political prisoner, a peaceful revolutionary, a member of parliament, a counsellor to refugees and migrants, a woman of deep faith, and as a mother - might have taken a very different course.

That November, the family returned to occupied Prague and resumed their lives, but in a radically altered world. Dana worked for a while as a marriage counsellor and therapist with hearing-impaired children.

As the regime cracked down on the freedoms gained during the Prague Spring, their spacious apartment in central Prague became a refuge where friends and colleagues and people who felt out of place in the demoralised atmosphere of "normalisation" could drop in and find congenial company, a drink, a meal, good conversation, an impromptu seminar or a great party, even a place to sleep. Among the regular visitors were writers, philosophers, painters and underground musicians, including members of the banned rock group the Plastic People of the Universe. Their household became a centre of spontaneous cultural resistance based, as Dana said later, "not on ideology, but on friendship and shared values".

The family paid a price: their flat was bugged and frequently searched by the secret police. But they persisted. When the police cracked down on the underground music scene in 1976, Dana helped organise an international protest that resulted in those arrested being released or given reduced sentences. She was among the first to sign the human rights manifesto Charter 77. (She served as a Charter spokesperson in 1989.) In 1978 she helped found the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Prosecuted, and a year later she was arrested, with her husband and eight other members of the committee, and spent six months in prison before receiving a two-year conditional sentence for "subversion". Friends stepped in to look after the children.

Later, when asked why she had assumed so many risks, she replied that she had done it for her children. "Our children were my best partners," she said. "I got involved because of them, so they'd never have to be ashamed of me."

> **"I got involved so that my children would never have to be ashamed of me**

She was born Danuška Valtrová in Most, in the Sudetenland region of north Bohemia, Czechoslovakia, the only child of Růžena (nee Ležáková) and František Valtr, both schoolteachers. Her father was also an officer in the home guard, and in 1938, when Nazi Germany annexed the Sudetenland, he became a person of interest to the Gestapo and the family had to flee to north-east Bohemia, where they spent the rest of the war.

After graduating from high school, she taught in elementary school for a year and then moved to Prague, where she studied clinical and child psychology at the Charles University. There she met her future husband, a charismatic Catholic intellectual whom she described as "an apostle of all good things". She was received into the church in the spring of 1955, and she and Jiří were married that summer. Their seven children arrived in quick succession. In 1983 the secret police forced Jiří into exile in Austria. (He returned when the regime collapsed in 1989, and died in 2001.)

In November 1989, the Berlin Wall came down and, shortly afterwards, a student demonstration in Prague triggered the so-called Velvet Revolution that swept the communists out of power. Dana joined the Civic Forum, the committee led by the future president, Václav Havel, to manage the transition to democracy. She travelled around the country, speaking at rallies in town squares and helping people organise.

In 1990, she served two short terms as a member of parliament, but by 1992, she had decided that party politics were not for her. In 1993, with Anna Grušová, she co-founded the Counselling Centre for Refugees and the Centre for Migration to provide psychological and practical assistance to the thousands of people seeking asylum from the violence in Yugoslavia, Chechnya and elsewhere. She also served for many years on the board of the Committee of Good Will, a charity founded by Havel's wife, Olga, to help people with disabilities.

In 1990 Dana received the Pax Christi international peace award, and in 1998 the Medal of Merit from Havel. One of her final public appearances was in 2019 when she spoke to a crowd of 300,000 people gathered to protest against the government of the then Czech prime minister, Andrej Babiš, a billionaire and former communist agent. She warned of the creeping erosion of their democracy and urged people to stand up for what they believe, even if the consequences are unpleasant. "I have my own rich experience with that," she said.

Dana is survived by five of her children, Jana, Pavla, Ondřej, David and Veronika, 21 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. A daughter, Marketa, and son, Jakub, predeceased her.

Paul Wilson

Dana Němcová (Danuška Valtrová), dissident and politician, born 14 January 1934; died 11 April 2023

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Michael Houldey

TV director with a knack for winning people's trust to make fly-on-the-wall documentaries

Michael Houldey, who has died aged 82, was a director whose television documentaries ranged from portraits of film and music giants to insights on world issues that reflected his original ambition to become a foreign correspondent.

Houldey's early work put on screen the realities of daily life for those struggling in Britain. The first example of this was Ebbw Vale, an episode in the 1968 BBC series Anything Legal Considered, about two school-leavers on a gap year. In Houldey's film, one worked in the steelworks, the other in a centre for people with learning difficulties.

"I saw a side of life completely unlike anything I'd known in a secluded, white, middle-class background," he said in a 2020 interview with the writer-director Sophie Robinson. Ebbw Vale was "dominated by the steelworks … a great monster billowing smoke all the time."

It was Jill Craigie, the pioneering documentary-maker and socialist, who pointed Houldey to the south Wales town - and constituency of her husband, the future Labour leader Michael Foot - when Houldey was an assistant director on her film Who Are the Vandals? (1967), questioning whether break-ins and graffiti on a Regent's Park housing estate in London were the fault of young people there or town planners, architects and politicians.

He followed the Ebbw Vale documentary with four contributions to the BBC's A Year in the Life series (1969), including one featuring Craghead, a County Durham mining community whose pit was threatened with closure.

Houldey had already started making programmes about showbusiness legends. Among his episodes in the Faces of Paris series (1968), he saw the opportunity to get Brigitte Bardot on screen by persuading Eddy Matalon to agree to being filmed directing the French star in a TV special.

Then, for the arts series Omnibus, Houldey made I Regret Nothing (1970), about the singer Edith Piaf. The penetrating portrait was a result of Houldey getting friends and colleagues, plus her two husbands, doctor, nurse and an estranged half-brother, to talk.

This ability to reach those who had been close to the big names was just as impressive when he directed Omnibus programmes on Humphrey Bogart (1971), securing an interview with the actor's co-star and wife Lauren Bacall; and Judy Garland (1972), talking to her daughter, Liza Minnelli, taking a dip in Mickey Rooney's pool and being told by Dirk Bogarde about his love for the Wizard of Oz star.

Switching to ITV, Houldey directed episodes of Granada Television's epic series The Christians (1977) and made Thames Television's trilogy Only in America (1980), joining homicide detectives in the Bronx ("I saw enough bodies to last me a lifetime").

Back at the BBC, one of the films he directed for the 1989 Great Journeys series was The Ho Chi Minh Trail, following the war photographer Philip Jones Griffiths through the jungle that had been the North Vietnamese army's main supply route south.

It was a long way from Penn, Buckinghamshire, where Michael was born to Irene (nee Evans) and Gerald Houldey, who had worked in Myanmar importing tea for the East India Company. After the second world war, the family moved to Eversley, Hampshire, where his parents ran a market garden.

"An Omnibus programme on Judy Garland involved taking a dip in Mickey Rooney's pool

On leaving Wellington college in Crowthorne, Berkshire, at 18, he travelled to Paris. Influenced by New Wave cinema, he performed in plays at the American Center while studying languages.

Returning to Britain, he popped up as a police officer in an episode of the 1961 TV thriller Flower of Evil before joining the BBC as a trainee film editor in 1963. He left two years later to be a freelance researcher.

As a director, his documentaries included Alan Price: Between Today and Yesterday (1974), taking the musician back to his Jarrow roots, and Welcome to Birmingham (1983), visiting Martin Luther King's cell in Alabama with the writer Caryl Phillips.

The ITV company Central gave Houldey the chance to make drama. In 1983 he directed the documentary Newlands, about disruptive pupils, and the fictionalised case history of "Belinda", under the title Troublemakers. This led him to make the 1988 BBC play Out of Love, based on a passionate relationship doomed through its clash with Welsh Methodism.

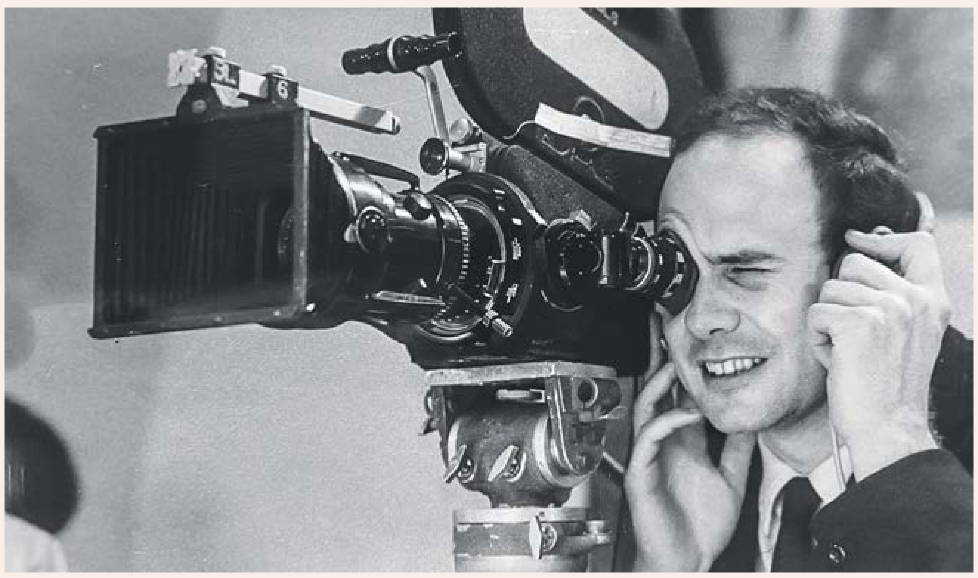
Houldey's skill at winning people's trust helped him as a producer for fly-on-the-wall programmes, including 1997 and 1998 editions of Children's Hospital; Zoo (1999-2000); Harrow: The School on the Hill (2001); Airport (2001-04); and Trawlermen (2007). He oversaw the 2004 series of Your Life in Their Hands, about surgeons, which won a Royal Television Society award.

He was an executive producer of the Emmy-nominated 2014 Netflix documentary My Beautiful Broken Brain, directed by Robinson, about a woman recovering after a stroke.

In 1965, Houldey married Judith Shapeero; she died in 2017. He is survived by his partner, Monica Lee, and the children of his marriage, Dominic and Gemma.

Anthony Hayward

Michael Gerald Houldey, director and producer, born 19 November 1940; died 10 February 2023



Houldey as a BBC trainee film editor in 1963. He became a hands-on television producer

Birthdays

Holly Aird, actor, 54; **John Bruton**, former taoiseach (Irish prime minister), 76; **Caroline Charles**, fashion designer, 81; **Lord (Patrick) Cormack**, former Conservative MP, 84; **Prof Sir Anthony Epstein**, pathologist, 102; **Tina Fey**, actor and comedian, 53; **John Godber**, playwright, 67; **Albert Hammond**, singer, songwriter and music producer, 79; **John Higgins**, snooker player, 48; **Prof Dame Celia Hoyles**, mathematician, 77; **Prof Malcolm Longair**, astronomer, 82; **Miriam Margolyes**, actor, 82; **Mark Menzies**, Conservative MP, 52; **Prof Dame Henrietta Moore**, anthropologist, 66; **Guy Opperman**, Conservative MP, work and pensions minister, 58; **Natalia Osipova**, ballet dancer, 37; **Jane Root**, broadcasting executive, former controller, BBC2, 66; **Michael Sandle**, sculptor, 87; **Jacques Santer**, former president, European Commission, 86; **Lionel Shriver**, novelist and journalist, 66; **Rick Wakeman**, musician and composer, 74; **Jessica Watson**, sailor, 30; **Toyah Willcox**, singer and actor, 65.

Other lives



Joyce Hastings

Nurse who used her knowledge and skills while travelling with her husband, a Methodist missionary

My mother, Joyce Hastings, who has died aged 98, lived in three different countries, each with its own culture, and thrived thanks to her Christian faith.

Joyce used her nursing knowledge and skills wherever she settled - from a clinic on a veranda in Barrackpore and Tollygunge, in the slums of Kolkata, India, to the special care baby units in Leicester and Whipps Cross hospitals in the UK, and at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

She was born in Norwich, one of eight children of Gilbert Holman, a clerk, and his wife, Stella (nee Rous), and attended Blyth school before training to be a nurse at Ipswich hospital, Suffolk, serving there during the second world war.

Joyce met her husband-to-be, John Hastings, at Calvert St Methodist Church, and they were engaged for seven years, until John completed his training for the Methodist ministry. Immediately after their wedding in 1951 they travelled by ship to West Bengal, India. They spent a year studying Hindi, Bengali and Santali at Darjeeling language school before serving with other missionaries in north India, and had three children, Christine, Ian and me.

Our family moved frequently, living in rural conditions in the villages of West Bengal: snakes and jackals visited the garden, festive food was eaten off banana leaves, travel was by bullock cart, and a cow was brought round to be milked. In 1966 we moved to Kolkata, where Joyce ran a guest house for colleagues, while John led social work programmes.

In 1971 the family moved back to the UK. My parents lived in Leicester, Newbury Park and Luton, then relocated to Dhaka, working there from 1981 until 1995.

Joyce cared for John until he died of cancer in 1998, then eventually was debilitated by macular disease and dementia herself, and was looked after in Ipswich by Christine.

Ian died in 2023. Joyce is survived by Christine and me, seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Karen Drayton

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Killer sudoku
Easy

4	2	5	8	7	9	3	1	6
9	1	8	6	3	2	5	4	7
3	6	7	4	1	5	9	2	8
5	7	2	3	8	6	1	9	4
6	4	9	7	2	1	8	5	3
1	8	3	9	5	4	6	7	2
7	5	6	1	4	3	2	8	9
8	3	1	2	9	7	4	6	5
2	9	4	5	6	8	7	3	1

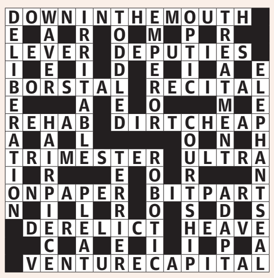
Medium

8	6	7	9	5	2	1	4	3
1	4	9	6	3	8	7	5	2
3	2	5	1	4	7	8	6	9
6	9	3	2	1	4	5	8	7
4	5	1	8	7	9	3	2	6
7	8	2	3	6	5	4	9	1
2	7	8	4	9	1	6	3	5
9	1	6	5	8	3	2	7	4
5	3	4	7	2	6	9	1	8

Codeword

	J		O		A		T	R	A	C	T	S
S	U	R	V	I	V	O	R		M		U	
	G		E		O		A		A	R	M	S
	F	O	R	E	I	G	N		Z		B	
	U		H		D		Q	U	E	L	L	S
G	L	O	A	T	S		U				I	
			N				I		E	R	N	E
	W		G	R	A	V	L	A	X		G	
R	I	M	S		A				P			
	S				R		T	E	E	T	H	E
S	T	Y	L	E	D		A		N		O	
	E		L		V	E	N	I	S	O	N	
A	R	I	A		A		N		I		E	
	I		M		R	E	I	N	V	E	S	T
D	A	M	A	S	K		N		E		T	

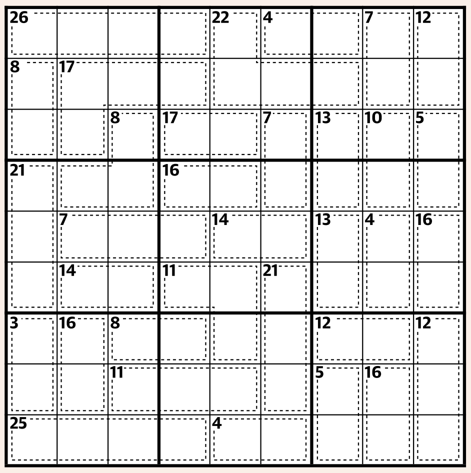
Cryptic crossword
Solution No. 29,072



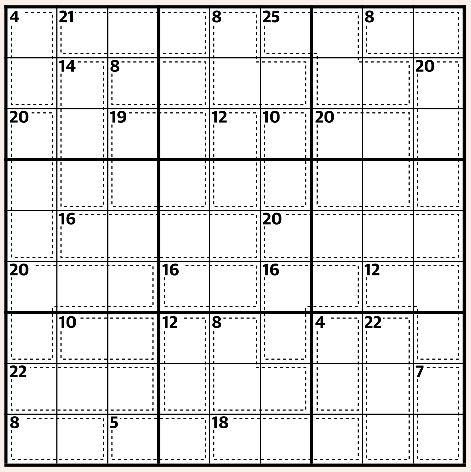
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.



Medium



Codeword

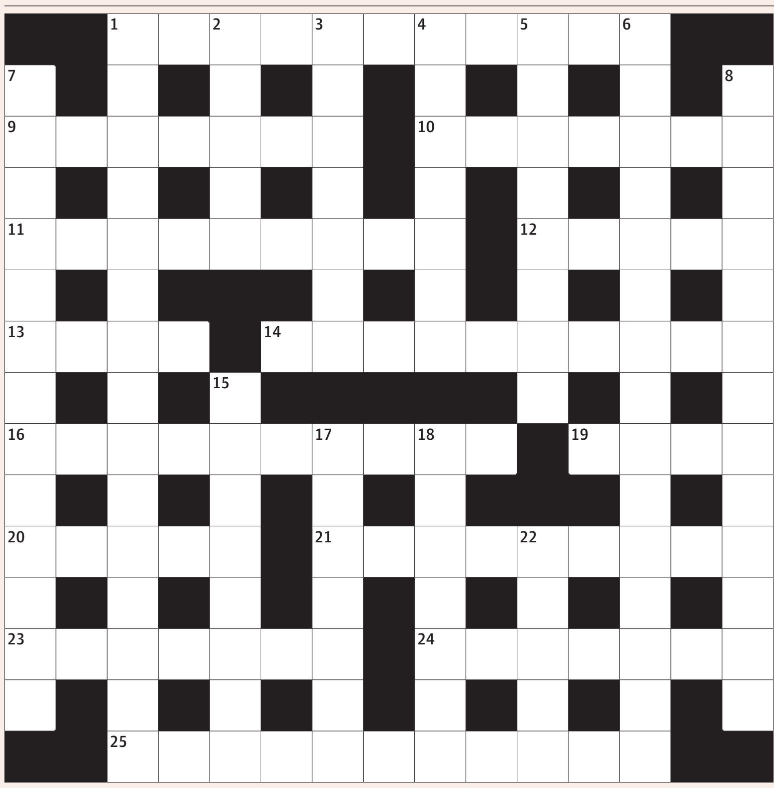
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.

14	9	26	7	5		4	26	9	13	16	20	
5		10		4		5		13		25		3
24	9	23	23	19	13	21		4	26	12	11	12
19		9		5		11		5		16		13
1	5	13	6	9	21	12	22		16	19	13	21
		4		20			5		5			9
5	9	20	14		12	2 Q	9	12	23	12	7	12
26			9		4		20		14			26
4	5	21	20	7	5	4	17		12	3	19	4
19			16		7			7		10		
13	9	14	20		10	15	10	26	1	19	20	10
12		12 A		18		10		9		22		20
22	12	20	20	5		13	19	14	8	19	14	20
20		14		5		5		10		13		12
	3	10	26	11	19	13		20	5	21	21	17

~~A~~ B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P ~~Q~~ R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2 Q	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 A	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,073 set by Imogen



Across

1 Fancy hot bedrooms are not groovy (6-5)
9 Flower sends submariner into an ecstasy (7)
10 One shied, caught out concealing scam (7)
11 Cosmetics salesperson from America comes back to make a big bang (9)
12 Tree's total area collecting carbon (5)
13 Accent presumably from the south-west (4)
14 Armada, circling a minute lifeboat, stalls (4,6)
16 One takes people through specialist trial (10)
19 Writing about sporting blunder in bad visibility (4)
20 Fat boy meets another finally across river (5)
21 Pole is three times wounded – he takes high risks (4,5)
23 We hear Oscar's agent did lose all control (3,4)
24 One who's withdrawn from class in recycling (7)
25 End striker's loan period for second leg (6,5)

Down

1 Wife not interested tonight? I can't manage (8,7)
2 Stench of Iberian river, bubble rising to the surface (5)
3 Ornamental tracery work probed by judge (7)
4 Out of helmet take a large pastry (7)
5 A man draws this stack of hay and wood (8)
6 Teacher preparing me a talk – me! Yuk, it's unbelievable (4,4,2,5)
7 There's malaria spreading: call for help (5,3,5)
8 Support each other to win hearts, blocking pig killer (5,8)
15 All the officers here succeeded in moving my trial (4,4)
17 Ring performer has millions on top of a little gold (7)
18 Favoured remedy in no way peculiar (7)
22 Lacy border seemingly good on bed (5)

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How much?!

Why did eggs get so expensive?

G2

The Guardian

Thursday 18/05/23

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Adrian Chiles



ADHD is no con. It made my own life heart-stoppingly, nerve-shreddingly difficult

'Turns out it's all a con, then," someone said to me. They were talking about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), in reference to Monday evening's BBC Panorama, which showed what looked like the decidedly doubtful practices of some reassuringly expensive private providers of psychiatry. So brilliant were some of the clinicians at the places featured that with the benefit of but a short questionnaire and a brief online chat, we were told they were able to diagnose ADHD and prescribe potent medication. Great! What service! And what a marvellous business plan: dosh for diagnoses, money for meds.

Panorama could hardly have made it clearer that while a handful of private clinics may be guilty of misdiagnosing ADHD, that doesn't mean that ADHD itself isn't a serious, debilitating condition. But if you've been a sceptic all along, or weren't watching carefully enough, or you didn't watch at all and merely half-heard or half-read something about the BBC programme, then you might well be the person who says to me: "Turns out it's all a con, then."

To be clear, it isn't. Many lives are blighted by undiagnosed and untreated ADHD. It will often lead to chronic underachievement at school, in the workplace, in relationships and to generally terrible decision-making in every aspect of life.

> Where there's desperation, there's money; so in gallops the private sector, for good or ill

Self-medication often leads to addiction issues. Those with ADHD are vastly overrepresented in the prison population. Suicide rates are appallingly high among men and women with ADHD. And these are overwhelmingly the kind of people who will wait for ever for diagnosis on the NHS and are extremely unlikely to have a grand to spare for a consultation at a private clinic, good or bad. This is an unfolding tragedy about which I'm available to make a Panorama show any time they care to ask.

My ADHD plainly didn't manifest itself as described above. I have been rather successful in my line of work, so I can hardly say it held me back. What I can say is that for an awfully long time I found my life heart-stoppingly, nerve-shreddingly difficult, as I veered wildly between the thrill of it all, and the crippling anxiety and depression. More than anything else, it was simply unsustainably exhausting and, I came to realise, potentially life-shortening. For a long time I thought this all came with the territory. But my diagnosis showed me it didn't have to. Once I knew what had been going on between my ears for all my life, with the help of therapy and some medication, I was equipped to make changes that slowly improved everything.

I wrote about my experience in these pages and banged on about it on the radio and television. Several people were kind enough to tell me that they recognised themselves in the picture I painted, and sought help. This is great, but the fact is that people like me – ie those who can afford to pay; apparently successful, high-profile ADHDers – seriously distort the whole picture. From a distance, it must look like all the adults with ADHD are doing rather well for themselves.



Not a week goes by without some actor, musician, writer or whoever sharing their diagnosis. I can see how this might sound like bleating self-pity and get on people's nerves. To be honest, I get on my own nerves sometimes. This candour, or oversharing perhaps, has helped to ease stigma around the condition and even – misguidedly in my view – seen it portrayed as some kind of superpower. But it has also had the unintended consequence of further overwhelming the already creaking NHS. ADHD has almost gone from being something no one wants to be labelled with, to a sought-after diagnosis – a demand the NHS can't meet. And where there's desperation, there's money; so in gallops the private sector, for good or ill. For those who can afford it, the care you pay for can be a lifeline. But, as Panorama suggested, it can also be a disgraceful con.

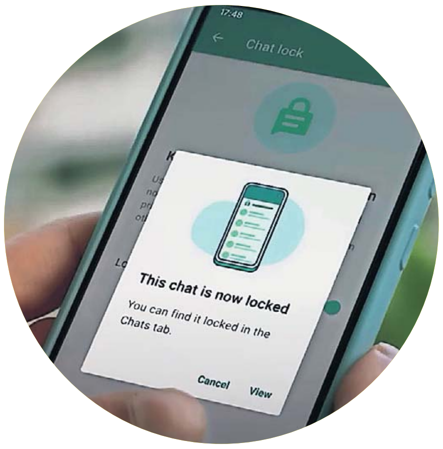
The worst thing, in terms of the stigma around ADHD, is that we're in danger of coming full circle. In the beginning it was a disorder with which no adult wanted to be labelled. It was something that particularly naughty schoolkids supposedly had. Then it became better understood. Those who could pay the money got the care they needed and sang hosannas about it. So the stigma slowly dissipated and demand for treatment rose. With drearily depressing inevitability some businesses saw a trough into which to put their snouts and, for a healthy price, hand out dodgy diagnoses. People see this is happening and so conclude that the whole thing is at best a bit of a craze and at worst a con. And before we know it, those with ADHD, or who think they might have it, are subject to a new, virulent variant of the stigma and shame we started out with in the first place.

Imagine being in their position, like a young woman I know in the same business as me. She's pretty sure it's ADHD that is making her life so miserable and wants to address it. With no hope of an NHS appointment any time soon, she has scraped together more money than she can sensibly spare to go private. So now she's stuck between the NHS, which can't help, and an expensive private consultation she possibly can't rely on. "I just feel I'm now in this awful dilemma. Going private should be an easy, albeit very expensive, solution, but now people might dispute the diagnosis anyway," she says.

"No one *wants* ADHD, no one *wants* to hand over a substantial amount of money, no one *wants* to take medication every day. All we want is clarity, and for everyday life not to be so damn difficult."

COVER: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Pass notes



№ 4,560

Chat Lock

Age: The Chat Lock feature on WhatsApp is new. Cheating, by contrast, has been going on since Venus was carrying on with Mars behind Vulcan's back, and probably long before that.

A new WhatsApp feature? How exciting! What does it do? And what has it got to do with cheating? One at a time, please. The new feature means you can hide conversations.

How? You tap on a group or a one-to-one chat, then enter a password or a biometric, like a fingerprint, to lock it – it's for your eyes only. The contents of that chat are also hidden in notifications.

And why? "We think this feature will be great for people who have reason to share their phones from time to time with a family member or those moments where someone else is holding your phone at the exact moment an extra-special chat arrives," a WhatsApp blogpost explained.

Mmm, "extra-special chat". What could that be about, I wonder? Is this more Elon interference, fooling around with his new toy? Wrong one. WhatsApp is owned by Meta – Mark Zuckerberg's your man.

What's he saying? Zuckerberg posted – on Facebook, obviously – about the new feature, with a helpful picture showing examples of "extra-special chats" you might want to lock.

And? One was labelled Fight Club.

As in the film with Brad Pitt? Exactly. You'll remember the first rule of Fight Club is you don't talk about Fight Club.

And the others? Another chat in the image was labelled "secret sauce recipe".

Oh! I get it. So it's like: on no account must my husband be able to read this one because it contains the puttanesca recipe that I'm going to surprise him with on his birthday … That's the idea, yes. Unless we're talking "secret sauce recipe", if you know what I mean?

No, I don't. What do you mean? Well, some people have suggested …

Which people, where? Facebook people, in reply to Zuckerberg. They've suggested that the new feature is designed for people who are having affairs. "Cheating has been upgraded," said one. Another commented: "On behalf of CPA (cheating partners association), we commend the great work you are doing."

A cuckold button, basically. That's what they're saying. And others have suggested it could be used more nefariously.

Such as? Well, I don't know. To form a secret club, maybe? One that meets in the basement of a bar to hold fights. Just an idea …

Do say: "No, Vulcan, love, you can't look at that one, it's my secret sauce recipe."

Don't say: "Thanks, Mark. And now if you could add buttons for the seven deadly sins …"



'All of us are worthy of love'

A bad breakup can knock your faith in romance - or even yourself. Here, relationship experts explain how - and when - to get back on the horse. By **Emine Saner**

Since she separated from her partner five years ago, Sarah has been on two dates. "Every time I think about it, I recoil at the idea of trusting someone like I did before," she says. On the rare occasion she looks at a dating app - the last time, she deleted it after 24 hours - she scours the profiles for warning signs. "It's very hard for me to see positives in people's profiles. Would I like to meet someone again? Absolutely. But I think my trust levels are damaged. I struggle trying to make any sort of connection."

Sarah, 44, and her partner had been together for eight years. They had agreed they would try for children in the future, but, over the years, she says, her partner became selfish and used her financially. When they finally broke up, he told her he had never had any intention of starting a family. "When that imploded, everything felt like it had ended, because I'd lost my sense of self during that time. It was a catastrophic change for me, even though I needed to be out of that relationship." It felt as if she had "failed as a human being", she says. "It's not just trusting other people; it's trusting myself. I let myself get into a situation before and now I don't trust my own judgment; will I see it next time?"

When the Guardian asked readers to get in touch about relationships that had made them lose faith in love, the responses covered a huge range of experiences, from surviving abuse to discovering affairs to simply feeling let down after being ghosted.

One woman, who is black, realised that she was being "fetishised by white men". On her last date, in which she met a man for the second time, he tried to kiss and touch her; when she asked him not to, he told her he wasn't going to see her again. "All these experiences reinforce my belief that men get physical quickly," she wrote - and they are quick to reject her when they don't get what they want.

One man, 54, has spent almost his entire adult life single after a negative experience with a girlfriend at university: "I've never come to terms with the loss and have been unable to move on with my life," he wrote. A 47-year-old woman wrote: "I'm tired. Tired of all the history of failure and emotional damage. I can't face trying anew for absolute fear of being blinded by love."

"The pain of being in a toxic relationship doesn't leave you and you wonder if you are going to go back to the same thing again," says Jo Hemmings, a behavioural psychologist and relationship coach. "It makes people reluctant and fearful of patterns repeating."

Hemmings says you need time to think about what happened and whether there were clues that you missed or chose to disregard. It can help you realise what you don't want, "even if it doesn't give you a great deal of information about what you do want". A therapist can help with impartiality and with identifying what you could learn from your experiences, she says: "It's comforting to have friends who all say: 'I hated them anyway,' but it's not always that helpful."

There is nothing wrong with being single, stresses Hemmings, but if you would like to be in a relationship again, taking your time will pay off. How long it takes differs for everyone, but one sign that you may be ready is when it doesn't feel like the odds are against you. "Am I ready to go for it, take that risk, use what I've learned from previous poor relationships and put them into effect?" says Hemmings. "Or do I still think it's probably not going to pan out well? Do I not trust men, or women?"

There is always a risk that you will be disappointed or heartbroken again, she says: "You've got to be aware that any relationship could unravel for whatever reason." But by taking the time to learn from previous relationships, rather than jumping into another, "you get better at spotting the signs".

Many of us "tend to see relationships in terms of pass or fail", says Cate Campbell, a sex, relationships and trauma psychotherapist. "If you think of them in terms of self-development, then it's more difficult to pass or fail: this is what happened, this is what was successful about it, this is what I want in the future, this is what I don't want." Campbell asks: if you are scared to restart your love

ILLUSTRATION: MONIKA JURCZYK AKA MONSIE. PHOTOGRAPHS: WESTEND61/GETTY

> **You've got to be aware that any relationship could unravel for whatever reason**

life, what is it that you are scared of? "Repeating the pattern? If you know what it is, you can be alert to it. Often, it is the fear of rejection. In that case, think about what you actually want. Do you want this to be a lifelong relationship, or are you just looking for some fun? What form should that fun take? Go into the relationship knowing that and not thinking: 'I'll only be validated if this person wants to be with me for ever.'"

Of course, recovering from a bad relationship depends on how bad it was. It can take years if the relationship was abusive – and some people don't realise that was the case, "which makes them at risk of a similar situation next time", says Campbell. Consequently, it makes sense not to rush into another relationship, but to allow time to recover from what has happened.

Having been in an abusive relationship actually makes it more likely that someone will get involved again too quickly, says Campbell, often as a way of trying to expunge the past. "Early red flags include love-bombing and excessive attention, especially when the new partner wants to spend time with you alone rather than with a group of friends," she says. "Another would be a new partner's early stories about their heartbreak or a 'crazy ex'. It's always wise to consider that the ex may have a very different version and to remain cautious initially."

When we talk about losing faith in love, "what it really means is losing faith in our own lovability", says Hilda Burke, a psychotherapist and couples counsellor. "A lot of people come into therapy when they've had a bad relationship experience or breakup, and often the first step is training them to believe that they are lovable, that all of us are worthy of love. That starts with being more loving towards ourselves. When you're in that frame of mind, you think: 'Why wouldn't someone like me and love me?'"

Instead, for many people who have been hurt or feel rejected, the kneejerk reaction is to go on dating apps. "We have something in our hands that offers a promise of love, or sex: 'I could just swipe and find someone who finds me attractive.' We can get an increase of dopamine, it can take the pain away in the moment," says Burke. But this is not helpful – especially when many people's experiences of apps comes with more rejection. "My new clients are often in that cycle of being hurt, feeling unlovable, going back to somewhere that offers this mirage of connection, but ultimately feeling more rejected, disappointed and disillusioned."

When you are ready to date again, especially if you are using apps, Burke recommends meeting in person before long. "Messaging for a long time builds up a fantasy of what that person might be and might offer you, and it can lead to a disappointment when you meet," she says. (She recommends a short daytime date, to temper the pressure and expectations.) "There's disappointment and rejection, even though there hasn't actually been a relationship, but there has been an attachment. Do you want a fantasy, or do you want a real-life connection with someone?"

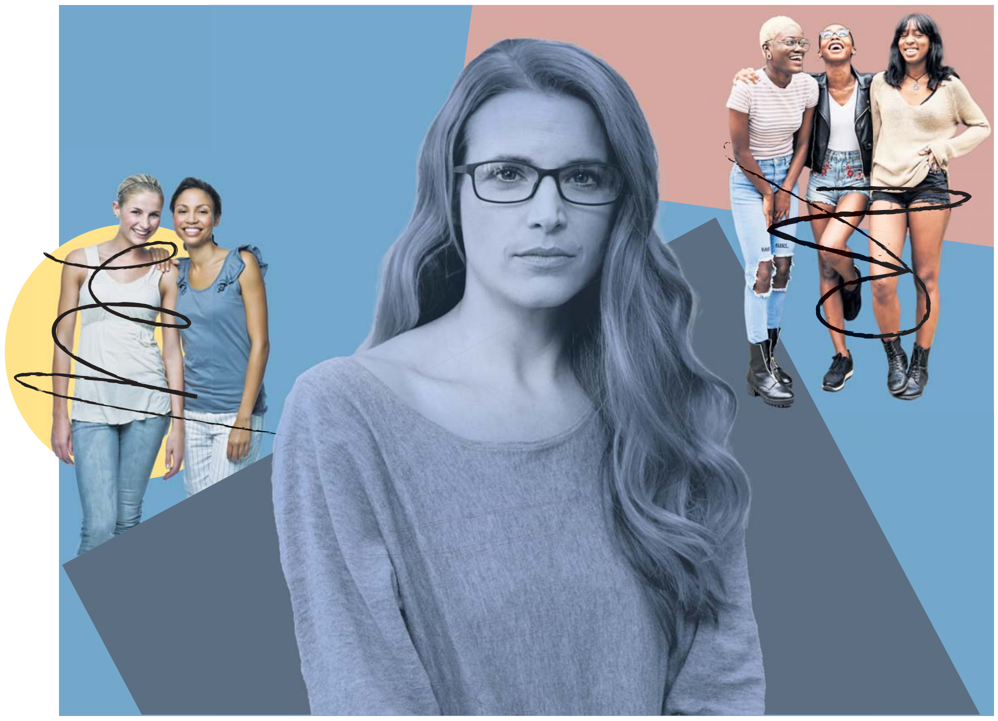
After her marriage ended, Lauren threw herself into dating within months. "In retrospect, I recognise that I was brittle and defensive. I was probably exactly the kind of person I was trying to avoid dating: somebody that wasn't ready and shouldn't have been there in the first place," she says. It was a distraction from the pain of her marriage breakdown, which had ended when she discovered her husband was having an affair when their baby was two weeks old. "It was an excuse to dress up. All my friends wanted to talk about was my divorce and how awful it was, how badly I'd been treated, and I just wanted something completely different."

For months, she says, her ex-husband had gaslighted her, making her think her suspicions were unfounded. She came out of the relationship "feeling very unsteady, with that sense of: 'I don't know what was real.'" It wasn't until last year, 13 years on, that she felt able to look for a new relationship. "It was a gradual mellowing over time," she says.

Her son made her question the feelings she had towards men in general. "He talked to me about how it's quite hard to grow up surrounded by the narrative of toxic masculinity. I realised that it wasn't just society he was getting that from; he was getting it from me at home as well. It really made me reflect on how ingrained my cynicism had become." She looked at her son. "Obviously, I'm biased – I'm his mother – but he's a really big-hearted, generous, lovely young man. So there's probably others out there."

She met her boyfriend on a dating app after putting up an honest profile. "He's one of the most incredible people I've ever met," she says. "A man overflowing with kindness and curiosity and fun. He has completely restored my faith in men. Whatever happens to our relationship, it feels so joyful to have healed my heart enough to be able to open it up completely to someone, to know that I might get hurt again, but feel strong and optimistic enough to take a chance."

Some names have been changed



Ask Anita

I'm struggling to make friends abroad and I feel lonely and unfulfilled

I left the UK to move abroad in early 2020, leaving behind (geographically speaking) the close friendships I had made in my formative years. Now, in my 30s, I am struggling to convert casual acquaintances into meaningful friendships. I work from home and I live alone, so to compensate I attend various social events and regular activities. I have met people I like and who seem to like me, but it never gets past the fledgling friendship stage – hanging out a couple of times before it fizzles out and we lose touch. The lack of close friendships is making me feel lonely and unfulfilled; something I once had is missing from my adult life. What can I do to improve my chances of building better, closer friendships?

Anita Chaudhuri replies: There is a sense of yearning in your letter to which many people will relate. The need to belong, to be accepted and approved of by others, has long been recognised by psychologists as a powerful human motivator. It sounds as though friendship has come easily to you previously, so this challenge may have taken you by surprise.

Hope Kelaher, a therapist and the author of Here to Make Friends, believes that the friendship landscape has changed since the pandemic: "We now live in a world where people's social battery and capacity for friendship is slightly more limited than it was. Some of us are still out of practice."

> It's easy to dwell on what you've left behind. This is a great opportunity for adventure

You mention your desire for "meaningful" friendships. I wonder what that signifies to you. Are you searching for trusted companions with whom you can upload the contents of your soul, or do you dream of hanging out with a rowdy group of regulars at a pub quiz? Is your relocation permanent or temporary? What social activities are on your wishlist? Once you are clear about all that, it will be easier to make a new plan of action.

Kelaher suggests that, in order to get the social life you want, it helps to be strategic, but also to embrace having friends who fulfil lots of functions. "There are friends you have fun with, neighbourhood friends, and then there might be others who don't share your interests, but you know you could count on to get you out of jail," she says.

The key to developing connections is to establish as soon as possible if there is common ground, says Georgie Nightingall, who runs the "human connection" organisation Trigger Conversations. "There are certain things everyone shares and these are the most conversationally fruitful – most of us read or watch TV, most of us have weekends," she says. Asking for literary or film recommendations can be particularly effective. "Then you can offer to email them a link to what you were talking about. It's a low-risk way of contacting them and inviting them for coffee."

Nightingall mentions "the liking gap" – the idea that people generally think a stranger likes them less than they do – so it's worth taking a risk. "If you're really enjoying a conversation, there's absolutely nothing wrong with saying: 'Fancy going for coffee sometime?' They probably wanted to suggest it, but we all fear rejection."

In your situation, it can be easy to dwell on what you have left behind. But moving abroad offers a great opportunity for adventure and reinvention. Seek out expat groups, language classes and English-speaking book groups, all of which offer a ready-made social life. Many people shudder at the thought of expat groups, so you might be wondering if it's worth the effort. I think it is. The dispiriting trouble with isolation is that it can leave you with nothing to talk about.

Years ago, while living in Paris, I joined an anglophone group. I still cringe at the memory: 12 misanthropic expats, all searching for camaraderie. I made no friends in that group, yet it transformed my social life. Why? Because, from then on, I had a great opening line for every person I met: "Let me tell you about this terrible expat group …"

So, dive in, be bold and relish every moment of your new life.

If you would like advice from Anita, go to theguardian.com/ask-anita

We're going on an egg hunt …





The cost of eggs has risen by 30% in a year - but farmers are finding it harder than ever to make a living. **Sam Wollaston** follows one egg from farm to table to find out why

In a field outside the village of Kehelland, near Camborne in Cornwall, a brood of hens are doing their thing - clucking, scratching, pecking at the ground, ranging freely among the grasses, crimson clover and kale. "All right, girls?" says Pete Olds, picking one up and cradling her fondly. They are bovans brown laying hens and he has 14,000 of them, which sounds a lot but is quite small in poultry farm terms.

Cornhill Farm has been in his family for four generations, though they have only kept poultry for a couple of decades. Before that they grew mainly cauliflower and raised beef cattle. They do have a bit of arable land now, but that is connected to the hens. "They are quirky little characters. It is a business, but you're also looking after animals, caring for them as best you can. You're a happy girl, aren't you?"

I can't tell how happy a hen is, but these ones certainly look healthy. This is the opposite of those shocking reports where someone goes into a battery hellhole with a hidden camera. These hens have a pretty nice life; the main danger round these parts comes not from Fantastic Mr Fox, but from above when a black-backed gull flies inland for a chicken takeaway. Even retirement isn't so bad here. Well, it exists - they are rehomed into domestic environments where they will continue to cluck, scratch and lay, if less prolifically. Most poultry farm birds, once they reach 80 weeks … well, it is best not to ask.

At night the chickens come home to roost - literally, not metaphorically - and Olds leads me into their shed. It is maybe a little less rurally idyllic inside: there are a lot of birds quite close to each other; it is a loud, full-on cluckophony. And a radio blares out Radio 1 - "They don't want Jeremy Vine," says Olds. (I didn't ask what they have against JV.) Anyway, the hens are free to go outside as they please during the day.

It is in the shed that they lay their eggs, in nest boxes that lead on to a conveyor belt. Most of the laying happens in the morning - it is now early afternoon - but looking down the conveyor I can see a few late arrivals. Olds presses the button, the belt clatters into life and brings us an egg - and another and another. The third is still warm, as fresh as they come. This lovely warm brown egg can be our egg, the one we follow.

First, a quick recap on its journey so far. Before its short trundle along the conveyor belt, the egg was - no more than a few minutes ago - expelled from the rear of a bovans brown. "Euuurgh," say the kids who come here on school trips. "You've got to educate people about where their food comes from," says Olds. "And it comes out of their bums - you've got to tell the kids that." It is impossible to say which hen's bum, but one of 3,200 in this shed, and there are four on Cornhill Farm.

And where did the hen come from? Duh, an egg - even the children know that. A fertilised egg, though, and not from here. Olds gets 16-week-old hens - pullets - from a poultry farmer in Dorset, who in turn gets one-day-old chicks from a hatchery. Hens start to lay properly at around 20 weeks.

> **Hens are quirky little characters. It is a business, but you're also caring for them as best you can**

A 16-week-old pullet now costs more than £6, up from £5.15 a year ago. That is the first of Olds' cost increases. There are more; we'll come to them later. But first to the other end of the egg's journey …

In my family we get our eggs from Waitrose because my missus is an egg snob and posh (we're talking frittata here, not egg and chips). We get most things from Lidl but eggs have to be Waitrose. Olds' eggs used to go to Waitrose; they don't any more, but we'll come to that too.

Six large free-range eggs now cost £2.50 at Waitrose, or 41.7p each. In May last year, they cost £2.10. So a rise of 40p - or 16%. In Lidl, large free-range eggs are considerably cheaper - £1.65 (we need to have a serious conversation about this in my house). A year ago, they were £1.15, so up 50p or 43%. On average, the price of eggs has risen by 30% in a year.

Of course, everything in your trolley has gone up in that time thanks to 19% food inflation, which you might just have noticed. Why have eggs gone up even more? Vladimir Putin is partly to blame. "When Ukraine was invaded by Russia that led to feed prices - the price of wheat particularly, and soya - going up enormously," says Robert Gooch, the CEO at the British Free Range Egg Producers Association (BFREPA). "Sixty to 70% of the cost of producing an egg, or any poultry product, is the price of feed."





Pete Olds with his hens on Cornhill Farm in Cornwall

Feed is the mixture of cereals hens eat. For Olds, that percentage of total cost is a little lower, about 50%, because they grow their own wheat, barley and oats (the hens like oats, he says - it keeps them calm). Still, it is by far the biggest cost and there are big hikes within that, too. To harvest your crops you need a tractor; the tractor needs fuel, which went up massively too, from around £1,000 for 1,000 litres to £2,500 at one point (thanks again, Vlad), though it is back down to around £1,700.

Feed prices have also dropped to £335 a tonne from £414 in May 2022. "They've gone down steadily since the Black Sea ports have been able to export wheat," says Gooch. The damage was done then, though, because, he explains, supermarkets didn't increase what they pay the farmers in line with the farmers' higher costs. As well as Mr Putin, we can point the finger at Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose, Morrisons, Lidl, etc. "The whole stupid thing could have been dealt with if supermarkets paid farmers according to their costs rather than according to demand and supply, which is how they do it," says Gooch. "They weren't short of eggs last year when costs went through the roof, so they said: 'Right, we're not paying you any more.'"

Bird flu is a serious worry for poultry farmers, not least because it is either impossible or incredibly expensive to insure against. An outbreak would be devastating. It is why Olds' hens weren't free to range over the winter - they were shut in: flockdown. But avian influenza isn't a new winter issue; it has been around for five years out of the last seven, says Gooch. "In the context of what has happened in the last year to egg prices, it has very little bearing. The predominant problem was lack of profitability due to the cost of inflation which wasn't compensated for by the retailers."

A year ago, British free-range egg farmers were, on average, losing 41p per dozen eggs. "I warned the supermarkets that farmers would go bust and they wouldn't have any eggs, which is what happened. Now they can't find any eggs and they're paying as much as they can for anyone who has got eggs," says Gooch. "The high prices now are because of a shortage of eggs since November, because farmers did go bust. Natural supply and demand in the markets mean that when there is a shortage, the price rises."

Early this year, Ged Futter, a retail analyst and former Asda buyer, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that British egg farmers were quitting "every week". BFREPA estimates that a quarter of egg farmers have stopped production temporarily or for ever. A third have reduced their flocks.

Fifty miles east of Olds, another Cornish egg producer, Helen Davey, has done precisely this. When she started in the business 25 years ago, a tonne of feed cost £125 and the wholesale price she was getting for eggs was 90p a dozen. Last year, when the price of feed was more than triple that, she was getting £1.10 a dozen. "There was no margin in the eggs that were sold wholesale, so we reduced our numbers by a third," she says.

It helped that hers is a mixed farm and a diverse business, and that they deliver their eggs locally. "If I hadn't had my own egg rounds, I would have got rid of the lot."



The hens range freely by day and go inside at night

Back at Cornhill Farm, that is how they now operate, delivering their own eggs locally. A couple of years ago, when they had a supermarket contract, it would have been a different story - the usual one - for our egg, fresh off the conveyor belt. A packing company would have come to collect it on a pallet, and taken it away to a depot to be graded and packaged. Our egg - my egg, as I'm beginning to think of it - would have got lost in the retail machine before emerging in the egg aisle of Waitrose somewhere, sold for a healthy profit and then made into frittata.

That's why Olds got out. "There's too much margin being taken out by someone else, and the raw producers don't see enough of it," he says. "We wanted to be an independent farm, and we can only do that if we take destiny into our own hands."

Their destiny and their eggs. He takes me and my egg on the short walk across the yard, past where his dad, Len, at 68 very much still active on the farm, is helping with the installation of a new grain dryer, to the packing shed, where Holly Murphy is grading and packing. Murphy is one of nine employees - one on arable, the rest on eggs, all local. They have got more expensive too. The hourly rate has recently gone up by a pound; the lowest rate is £12 an hour.

Murphy confirms that my egg is large. She will pack it into one of Cornhill Farm's branded cardboard egg boxes, the price of which recently rose 30% to about 12p each. Another cost rise is energy, but you know all about that.

It now costs Olds £1.62 to produce a dozen eggs. Or 13.5p an egg. That's with packing and packaging (Murphy plus cardboard boxes). Without them - which is how they used to be collected - it costs £1.46 a dozen. He looks up the price the packing company they used when the eggs went to a supermarket is paying: for large eggs, £1.47 a dozen - a margin of a penny. That £1.47 is up from an average of £1.18 over the last year, meaning they would have been losing 28p a dozen, and … Out comes the calculator … £71,300 down on the year. "That's exactly why people said: 'We can't carry on.'"

"We've reduced our hens by a third. Without my own egg rounds, I'd have got rid of the lot"

It's so frustrating, Olds says, because there are great British farms producing quality food. "We just want to be paid fairly for it. That is the bottom line, and farmers are feeling the system is broken and the supermarkets have got too much say in it all."

For now, his eggs don't go to supermarkets. They go to farm shops, cafes and restaurants, nearly all in west Cornwall. They pay him £2.60 a dozen for large ones. So my egg won't be going far. It might go into a breakfast at Jenn's Diner up the road in Redruth. Or the other way to the shop on Trevaskis Farm, or into one of the cakes in the restaurant, or a bit further to the food bank in St Ives. Except that it isn't actually going to any of those places. This one, and five others, is coming home on the train with me, to be soft-boiled for tea. With soldiers.





Cornhill's eggs are packed on site and sold locally

PHOTOGRAPHS: JONNY WEEKS/THE GUARDIAN



'Being a gran is my favourite job' … Marsh couldn't afford nappies as a single mother

Could she be magic?

The horror of Hear'Say, 13 years in Corrie, press raking through her bins … as she joins the Take That musical, Kym Marsh tells **Emine Saner** why nothing will ever stop her having a go

'You were good today, I'm proud of you," Kym Marsh calls across the hotel room. Her 26-year-old daughter, Emilie Cunliffe, has arrived from rehearsals and they're going out tonight. Marsh switches into mothering mode: "Do you want some dinner? Get some food." The pair are starring in Greatest Days, a musical based around Take That songs – renamed from its 2017 version, The Band – which has just started touring the UK.

Both Marshes play the lead character Rachel, who, as an adult, gets back in touch with her old mates to see their favourite boyband from their teen years. It's a musical about the passing of time, friendship, loss, and the place and power pop music has in our lives. A majority of the audience will be familiar with the Take That hits – so are they worried about people dancing and singing along, which has caused disruption at other shows recently? "It's Take That – people are going to know the tunes," says Marsh. "There's always a part in a musical where the audience are encouraged to join in, usually at the end. I think it's a fine line between enjoying yourself and disrupting the entire thing. It's nice when people are enjoying it, but we've got a job to do."

This is Marsh's first stage musical since she appeared in Saturday Night Fever in 2004. That came after pop stardom – she was in the reality TV band Hear'Say, created through the TV show Popstars, then had a fairly short-lived solo career followed by a successful move into acting. In 2019, she left Coronation Street, where she had been for 13 years, did Strictly Come Dancing, and just yesterday was doing something for her role on the BBC school drama Waterloo Road. She is also a presenter on the daytime TV show Morning Live. It's her work ethic, says Emilie, that most made an impression on her and her older brother during their childhood. "She goes out and she does what she does, for us."

Marsh was watching Emilie rehearse today, and someone commented on the pride in her face. "It's beautiful to see her right at the start of her career, because I remember what that feels like," she says. She is restrained enough not to burst into the relevant lyric from a Take That song – "Someday soon this will all be someone else's dream" – but I'm not.

Is it hard not to slip into a mothering role at work? "If she does need anything, I'm there. But we don't have that kind of mum-and-daughter relationship because she's an adult now and she's a mum herself." Marsh was in her early 40s when she became a grandmother, and now has three grandchildren. "I love it. It's my favourite job in the world," she says.



'A reinvention'… in Coronation Street

> **If you believed everything you read about me at the time, I was the biggest bitch in the world**

Often Emilie will ask her advice, Marsh says, knowing she will be honest. "My dad was my worst critic. I mean, he's my biggest supporter, and because of that, if I wasn't firing on all cylinders he would tell me. I respect that. I'm not one of those parents who says: 'That was amazing!' if it wasn't."

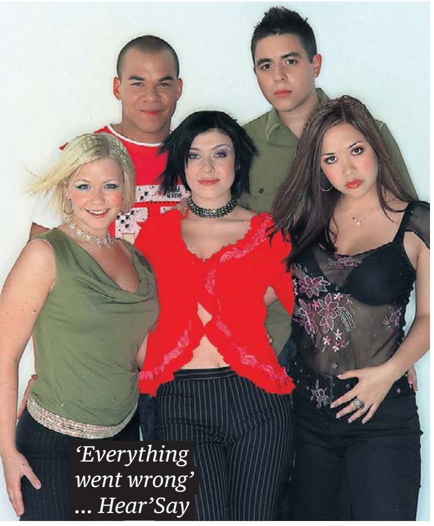
Marsh was a teenager when Take That were at their 90s peak. (Her favourite? Gary Barlow). "Do you remember when they first came out and wore that kind of leather gear?" she laughs. She was 18 when her son was born (Emilie came along two years later), around the time Back for Good was No 1. "It was the only song I could get him to go to sleep to," she says. She used to carry him around her living room, rocking him to it.

Marsh had always wanted to be a performer, and loved being on stage. "I think about how alive I felt. I still do – when we're on stage and we're actually doing the show, you become someone else almost." She was bullied "quite badly" at school, she says, and performing "was my escape". "I got on stage and just became this confident person which, in real life, I wasn't." It's why she prefers acting to singing now: "I get to be someone else for a bit."

Marsh, who grew up in Wigan, spent her childhood singing, and as a teenager had a deal with a Manchester record label. Her parents would put her on the train to work in London for the day as a session singer. In her early 20s she was a full-time single mother to two young children but her parents encouraged her to keep going with her dream. "They said: 'It's more of a reason for you to push forward, because you've got children relying on you now.' And they were right, it absolutely was. I always say my children are my real driving force because, in the beginning, it was about creating a life for them." She was surviving on benefits and maintenance payments from the children's father – a life where "you live hand-to-mouth", she says. Her sister had also had children young and Marsh remembers them clubbing together to buy packs of nappies.

The 2001 ITV show Popstars was the precursor to The X Factor, and Marsh borrowed a friend's car to

PHOTOGRAPHS: LINDA NYLIND/THE GUARDIAN; ALASTAIR MUIR; REX FEATURES; ITV PLC


'Everything went wrong' ... Hear'Say

get to the audition and queued in the cold. She got in, along with four others, and Hear'Say became huge when the show aired. "This whole life just came from nowhere," says Marsh. She loved it but it was also tricky. "There were elements that changed completely for the better and then there were other times when I wasn't with my kids. Those are the things I found hard."

The tabloid intrusion was relentless, too. "They were going through our bins. It was intimidating." Because Hear'Say were one of the first reality-show bands, managing their career was also something of an unknown for the people around them, says Marsh. "There was burnout. We ended up on everything, at everything, in everything, and people got bored of us quicker than they would normally have. They were new to it as well, so it wasn't anyone's fault. But I feel we probably didn't have enough support around us, and I think that's why everything went wrong."

There were stories about Marsh and her bandmates not getting on - "If you'd believed everything you read about me at that time, I was the biggest bitch in the world," she says - and not long after Marsh left the band, Hear'Say imploded. Her bandmate Suzanne Shaw has talked about using alcohol and sleeping pills to cope, but Marsh seems to have come through it relatively unscathed. It helped that she left before things got really bad, when Hear'Say became mercilessly mocked by the public, she says. "Also, we all were different. They were younger than me. I had children, so I had different responsibilities. That probably grounded me more. That's not to say I didn't experience what they experienced: I went through my own trauma. But because I had the children, and so much support around me - my parents moved to London - I feel like I got through that."

Marsh had two Top 10 singles and released an album as a solo artist before she was dropped by her record label. She wasn't sure what she would do next but tried to believe something would come along. If it didn't work out, she thought, she would go back to college to train as a hair and makeup artist - she had enrolled just before the Hear'Say audition. Then she got the role in Saturday Night Fever and rediscovered her love of acting.

Although she was wary of people dismissing her as a reality TV pop star trying to become an actor, she slogged away at auditions. Her part as Michelle Connor in Coronation Street, she says, was initially only for three episodes. "I ended up there for 13 years. It was a reinvention and it was just nice to have people who would take a chance on you. I learned so much at Corrie - I never went to drama school, I learned by watching other people." One of her storylines, in which her character gave birth to a baby too premature to survive, was based on Marsh's own experience of the death of her son Archie, and she was praised for raising awareness of an experience that is still little talked about.

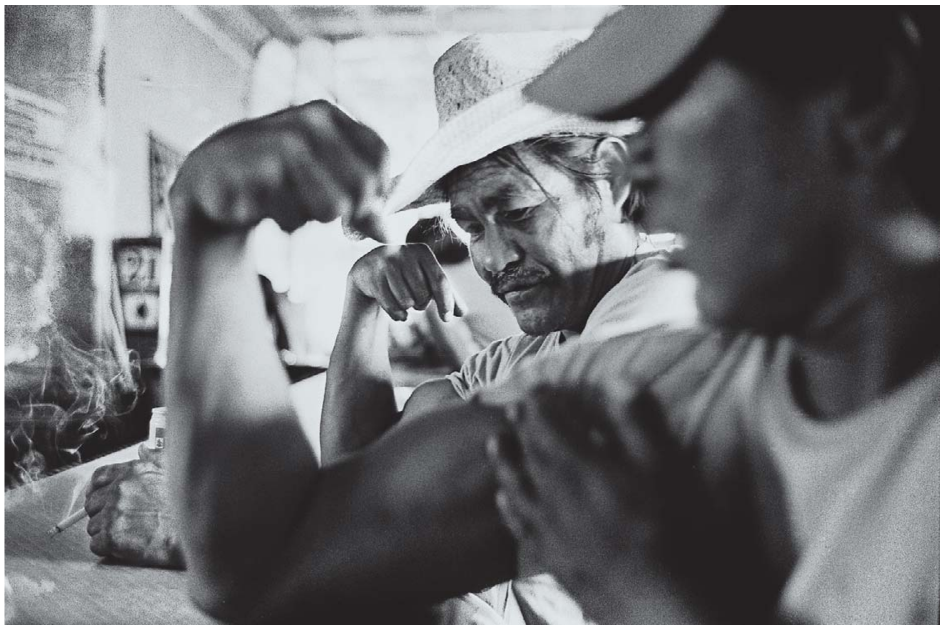
She has been through a lot - teenage motherhood, failed marriages, personal tragedy, public scrutiny - but her resilience is learned, she says, rather than natural: "It's just experience." Marsh left Coronation Street to try something new. "I think I am a risk-taker because 'What if?' is always worse. Comfortable is not good. I always want to be that person who has a go, because I wouldn't want to sit there years down the line and say: 'I wonder what would have happened if ...?'"

Greatest Days is on tour until 25 November


Shine ... Marsh with daughter Emilie Cunliffe in Greatest Days

Roswell Angier

'This is a seedy bar in New Mexico. These Navajo men were fascinated by John Wayne since The Hallelujah Trail was filmed around there. Yet Wayne isn't in it'



PHOTOGRAPHS: ROSWELL ANGIER

Before I went there, I knew nothing about the town of Gallup in New Mexico. I was familiar with a Robert Frank photograph of a Navajo cowboy, taken in a bar there in the 1950s that was published in his classic book The Americans. But I decided to go there because of an exchange I had with my father in 1966. His mother had recently died and the whole family had gathered in Tucson in the house of an uncle. I hadn't seen my father for three years. It was the Fourth of July. I remember some desultory conversation before my father offered an opinion about our treatment of North American Indigenous people. His tone wasn't argumentative. His words just hung there and drifted away. He died later that day in a tragic accident, so we never got a chance to pursue the discussion. More than a decade later, my wife Susan - a painter - and I secured funding to produce some work, and thinking of my father and of Robert Frank's Navajo cowboy we chose to do so in Gallup.

At first glance, the town seemed like the edge of the world, with an upside-down exotic appeal. Of course, it was not that at all. It was layered. It was an in-between place, where people from different cultures collided with each other, often struggling to maintain their identities and not be overwhelmed by other people's assumptions about who they were. Sometimes it seems as if the world has become increasingly consumed by this battle but it's a very old story.

This was taken in the Indian Head Bar, a seedy place in the nearby town of Holbrook. I was just hanging out and some local guys gathered around me - it was not the kind of place where they would see many Anglos - and before long a familiar scenario saw me being quizzed about John Wayne. Navajo men of a certain age were absolutely fascinated by him. I later discovered that the source of this fascination was the movie The Hallelujah Trail, which was shot in the mid 1960s around Gallup - even though Wayne is not in it. But this detail did not seem to matter, and in the collective imagination of legions of Navajo males Wayne was forever associated with Gallup. And of course, in talking about Wayne, these guys would inevitably start to act out fantasies of being powerful and masculine.

My way of working is to never ask to take a shot. I talk to the people around me and then from time to time I raise my Leica, pause to see if there are any objections, then snap a few pictures. One of the things I love about this shot is the light. This was a dingy bar into which shafts of light were exploding through the blind. It was a nightmare in terms of getting the right exposure, but I am proud of myself for having handled that situation with fluency.

In many of my photographs a figure in the background is framed by the blurred outline of a foreground figure. It produces an image that the onlooker has to work at to understand, by filling in the missing information. When an image is pin sharp it is easier to forget, but here, the shadowy figure somehow enters your own mental space. He becomes almost glued to your psyche.

Interview by Thomas Weaver.

Gallup, by Roswell Angier and Susan Hawley, is published by The MIT Press on 6 June

The CV

Born: *New Haven, Connecticut, 1940*
Trained: *Self-taught*
Influences: *'Walker Evans, Garry Winogrand, William Klein, William Carlos Williams, Baudelaire'*
High point: *'When Charles Harbutt asked if I would join him in a new collective of photographers'*
Low point: *'In Gallup when I was sick of the place and the apartment where my wife and I were living'*
Top tip: *'When I was young and bored my father used to say: "Read a good book." One time I asked which book and he growled Moby-Dick. It was really good advice'*





'It was not rock'n'roll' ... Busted bassist Matt Willis

Review Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction, BBC One

A moving look at the effects of addiction on a pop star's family

★★★☆☆

Chitra Ramaswamy



Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction begins with the Busted bass player's wife, Emma. In their big, light-filled house in Hertfordshire, the TV presenter opens a drawer that tends to remain shut. She retrieves a diary she hasn't read since she wrote it in the run-up to their wedding in 2008. It contains, she says with a tight smile, "notes of what I knew he had consumed". She reads a couple of entries: "Bottle of champagne ... couple of wines ... couple of wines ... another bottle of champagne." The words "and more" refer to drugs. There are entries for every single day. "I used to drive around looking for him," she says, welling up.

It sets the scene for this intimate, often tearful exploration of Willis's decades-long battle with drug and alcohol addiction. A story of the ricochet back and forth between relapse and sobriety that focuses as much on Emma's pain as Willis's. Celebrity addiction is a well-trodden subject, but less explored is its devastating impact on families. Willis's film, in which he sets off around the country and into his own past to try to find out why he is as he is, is in equal parts Emma's film. His last relapse happened when the youngest of their three children was 10 months old. His first words to camera are about his wife: "I've hurt her so many times I don't know where to begin."

Let's begin with the band, formed in 2002 by Willis, James Bourne and Charlie Simpson, who came on board last and was the first, three years later, to say he wanted out. In their brief time at the top, Busted were huge. Sold-out arena tours, million-selling albums, or, as Willis put it then: "All I saw was boobs everywhere!" Grim. By the age of 18, he was signing a six-figure contract. By 22, he was an addict. He couldn't get to midday without drinking and using. During a later relapse, which "flabbergasted" Emma because it followed eight years of sobriety, Willis was taking six grams of cocaine a day. "It was not rock'n'roll," he says. "It was really sad." Today, he's sober, "but I'm not recovered," he says. "My head is fucked."

Willis's relapses happen when he's on the road. What really scares him is how much he loves the lifestyle. Less is said about its enabling environment, which feels like an omission. When Simpson comes over for a cuppa, they laugh about the night in Germany (which Willis barely remembers) when they drank "30 or 40" B52s and Simpson vomited in Willis's suitcase. "I dragged it to the airport leaking puke out the bottom," Willis recalls. Simpson says he wasn't aware how bad things were. "We were kids," Willis shrugs. Which would have been the ideal moment to bring up the music industry's failure, time and time again, to fulfil its duty of care. But no.

Instead, Willis returns to his "messy" childhood, most of which he can't remember. He goes to Molesey in Surrey, where he grew up, to meet his brother Darren. Their parents divorced when he was three and Darren was five. A stepfather, with whom things got "heated", came on the scene. Music was Willis's escape. Later he tells a consultant at the Tavistock clinic that he "became a bit of a robot". Even as a child, he was chasing oblivion. It started as a matter of survival. Back on a bench in the field where he used to smoke weed, drink and once fell out of a tree wasted (he can't remember that, either), he and Darren talk for the first time about their childhood, and how Darren left when he was 13 to live with their dad. "I always felt guilty for leaving you there," he says. "I always felt guilty for not going with you," Willis replies.

He goes back to the first rehab facility he attended in Bournemouth. Three days after he left, he and Emma got married and he made it through the wedding sober. The two of them attend a Glasgow project supporting families of addicts. It's the first time Emma has sought help, and though the stories recounted in a group session are heartbreaking, equally moving is her inability to articulate what she has been through. "I didn't know groups like this existed," she says, breaking down.

Willis remains terrified of relapsing, so it seems fitting that the documentary ends as he prepares for a Busted reunion tour. His manager phones to get the band's tour rider. For Simpson, it's crisps, four bottles of red wine, two bottles of white wine and pale ale. Which made me worry about him, too. For Bourne, it's Um Bongo and Dairy Milk Marvellous Creations. And for Willis, protein powder, MCT oil, nuts and berries. Emma is terrified but also clear-eyed about what they're wrestling with: "It's part of who he is," she says of Willis's addiction. "And who he is is who I love."

What's On

Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Open House: The Great Sex Experiment
10pm, Channel 4



"If you wanna be my lover, you've gotta get with my wife!" It's the return of the reality series in which couples experiment with open sexual relationships – for better or for worse. Curious parents-of-three Chanice and Richardo and nervous newlyweds Kirstie and Connor are first to enter the mansion, where plenty of horny couples are waiting to join them in the bedroom, which has been fitted with night-cams.

Hollie Richardson

24 Hours in A&E
8pm, Channel 4
In 2015, a 22-month-old girl was rushed by air ambulance to St George's hospital in London with a suspected fractured skull after being kicked in the head by a horse. That nerve-jangling incident is among the cases featured in this special retrospective episode of the series, characterised by calmness, care and comfort. **Graeme Virtue**

Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars
9pm, BBC One
The remaining foodies duke it out for the £150,000 investment in the semi-finals. How will their social media skills measure up under the watchful eye of TikTok's Uncle Roger? Can they impress a food photographer for a Waitrose magazine shoot? And who will be left as virtual roadkill after their one-to-one grilling by Gordon? **Ali Catterall**

Guilt
9pm, BBC Two
"Beginnings are where you find the endings." After three seasons of moral missteps and vinyl-black humour, the superb Edinburgh noir reaches its finale. Brothers Max and Jake are still trying to leverage the megabucks bank sale while staying one step ahead of vengeful crime boss Maggie Lynch. But will anyone get away clean? **GV**

Taskmaster
9pm, Channel 4
There has never been a bad season of Taskmaster, but you know you have a great one when the panellists are making each other roar with laughter. That's the case this week as the five comics review their attempts to repurpose umbrellas, rescue pineapples from a pond and balance heavy items on a jelly. **Jack Seale**

Last King of the Cross
9pm, Sky Max
A gritty new Australian drama inspired by the autobiography of nightclub owner John Ibrahim and his experiences in Sydney's "mecca of sin", Kings Cross. It opens with various flashbacks, including John (Lincoln Younes) and his brother Sam (Claude Jabbour) at their crime leader father's deathbed. **HR**

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **MasterChef** (T) The hopefuls compete to experience a professional kitchen, with John Torode and guest judge Monica Galetti choosing who will work in the Royal Opera House's Piazza restaurant.
9.0 **Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars** (T) The semi-finalists have their social media skills tested.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **Question Time** (T) Fiona Bruce chairs the topical debate in Fort William.
11.40 **Newscast** (T) A weekly round-up from Westminster, hosted by Adam Fleming and Chris Mason.
12.10 **Weather for the Week Ahead** (T) **12.15** News (T)

BBC Two

6.30 **Money for Nothing** (T) (R) **7.15** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **8.0** Between the Covers (T) (R) **8.30** Caught Red Handed (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **3.15** Secret Britain (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Watergate to Trump: Amol Rajan Interviews (T) **7.45** Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs (T)

8.0 **DNA Family Secrets** (T) (R) A woman who grew up in a Nazi concentration camp as a Jewish orphan longs to know more about her family.
9.0 **Guilt** (T) Max has a plan to seize Sturrock's money but will not tell Jake what it is, leaving his brother close to entering a secret alliance with Sheila. Last in the series.

10.0 **Inside No 9** (T) Darkly comic tale set on a bus.
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.15 **The Stones and Brian Jones** (T) Music documentary.
12.50 **Sign Zone** Inside the Factory (T) (R) **1.50** Dr Xand's Con Or Cure (T) (R) **2.35** Iolo's Borderlands (T) (R) **3.05** MasterChef (T) (R) **3.35** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Men (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.30 **Tonight: All-Inclusive Holidays – Unpacked** (T) With a sharp rise in the cost of holidays, Ginny Buckley reports on whether all-inclusive breaks could be the way to go.
9.0 **Without Sin** (T) Stella finally learns the devastating truth about what happened to her daughter.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 **The Late Debate** (T)
11.10 **DNA Journey** (T) (R) Amanda Holden and Alan Carr delve into their family histories.
12.15 **All Elite Wrestling: Rampage** (T) **1.10** Shop: Ideal World **3.0** Love Your Garden (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Family Fortunes (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **24 Hours in A&E** (T) A look back at some of the most memorable staff and patient stories filmed since 2011 at King's College Hospital and St George's in south London.
9.0 **Taskmaster** (T) The comics inventively repurpose umbrellas and Frankie Boyle goes to town on a gigantic cat scratching post.

10.0 **Open House: The Great Sex Experiment** (T) New series.
11.10 **Naked Attraction** (T) (R)
12.10 **Kitchen Nightmares USA** (T) (R) **1.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **1.25** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Roman J Israel, Esq (2018) (T) **4.15** The Great British Dig (T) (R) **5.05** House of Craft (T) (R) **5.15** Moneybags (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Ruby Herring Mysteries: Her Last Breath (Fred Gerber, 2019) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Michael Portillo's Pyrenees Adventure (T) (R)

8.0 **Jane McDonald's Magical Morocco** (T) The singer unearths the secrets hidden in the markets of Marrakech, and while shopping she learns the art of haggling.
9.0 **Alexander Armstrong in Sri Lanka** (T) New series. The presenter explores the south Asian country, beginning in the fortress town of Galle.

10.0 **Killer at the Crime Scene** (T)
11.05 **Cause of Death** (T) (R)
12.05 **Police Interceptors** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Good Girls' Guide to Kinky Sex (T) (R) **3.50** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.35** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **4.55** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.20** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **The Sky at Night** (T) (R) The threat of an asteroid impact on Earth. **7.30** Railways: The Making of a Nation (T) (R) How the railways stimulated great changes to the British economy.

8.0 **A House Through Time** (T) (R) David Olusoga traces the history of an 18th-century Bristol sea captain's house.
9.0 FILM **Tea With Mussolini** (Franco Zeffirelli, 1999) (T) English and American women living in Florence in the 1930s adopt a boy. Comedy-drama, starring Maggie Smith, Judi Dench and Cher.

10.50 FILM **Summer Holiday** (Peter Yates, 1963) (T) Four mechanics set off on a trip across Europe. Musical, starring Cliff Richard.
12.35 **Mark Kermode's Secrets of Cinema: Pop Music Movies** (T) (R) **1.35** Paul Merson: A Walk Through My Life (T) (R) **2.35** A House Through Time (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three
7.0pm Top Gear **8.0** MOTDx **8.30** MOTD Top 10: Penalty Takers **9.0** Joey Essex: Grief and Me **10.0** Black Ops **10.30** Man Like Mobeen **10.55** Man Like Mobeen **11.20** Squad Goals: Britain's Youngest Football Boss **12.20** MOTDx **12.50** MOTD Top 10: Penalty Takers **1.20** Man Like Mobeen **2.10** Squad Goals: Britain's Youngest Football Boss **2.40** Joey Essex: Grief and Me **3.40** Zen Motoring

Dave
6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.35** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** Meet the Richardsons **10.40** Mock the Week **11.20** Mock the Week **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4
6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** Gogglebox **11.05** First Dates **12.10** The Big Celebrity Detox **1.15** Rick and Morty **1.50** Royal Crackers **2.15** Gogglebox **3.10** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.50** The Neighborhood **5.15** The Neighborhood

Film4
11.0am FILM Three Hours to Kill (1954) **12.35** FILM Comanche Station (1960) **2.10** FILM High Noon (1952) **3.55** FILM Cutthroat Island (1995) **6.15** FILM Bridge of Spies (2015) **9.0** FILM The Book of Eli (2010) **11.15** FILM Death Proof (2007) **1.30** FILM Barking Dogs Never Bite (2000)

ITV2
6.0am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Gordon, Gino and Fred: European Road Trip **10.0** Family Guy **10.30** Family Guy **11.0** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.0** American Dad! **12.30** Bob's Burgers **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Superstore **1.55** Superstore **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max
6.0am Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **9.0** Last King of the Cross **10.0** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **10.45** Fantasy Island **11.45** Resident Alien **12.40** NCIS: Los Angeles **1.35** Road Wars **2.05** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol **5.30** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts
6.0am André Rieu: Welcome to My World **7.0** HMS Pinafore With ENO **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Jack Lemmon **12.0** The Artist's Garden: American Impressionism **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Laurie Lee: The Lost Interview **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Claudette Colbert **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: David Niven **8.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **9.0** The Directors **10.0** Discovering Film: Horror Special **11.30** Elvis Costello and the Imposters Live in Memphis **1.50** The Michelangelo Code: Secrets of the Sistine Chapel **4.05** Backstage: Ralph Fiennes in Straight Line Crazy **5.05** Auction **5.35** Auction

Sky Atlantic
6.0am Urban Secrets **7.0** The Wire **9.25** True Blood **11.35** Game of Thrones **12.40** Ray Donovan **2.50** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Billions **11.20** Gangs of London **12.25** The L Word: Generation Q **1.30** In Treatment **2.0** Game of Thrones **3.05** Der Pass **4.05** Urban Secrets


Bridge of Spies, Film4

Radio

Radio 3
6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (4/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Viol player Liam Byrne and lutenist Jonas Nordberg play works by Marais, Kapsberger and Ortiz. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Ulster Orchestra play Sibelius's Symphony No 6. Plus, music by Bach, Bacewicz and Ravel. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. John Storgårds conducts the BBC Philharmonic, bass-baritone Kostas Smoriginas, violinist Jennifer Pike and the Estonian National Male Choir in Pärt's De Profundis, Sibelius's Violin Concerto and Shostakovich's Symphony No 13, "Babi Yar". **10.0** Free Thinking. Matthew Sweet is joined by Simon Heffer and Tim Burrows for a discussion on Essex. **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. The story of the Fonthill vase. (R) **11.0** The Night Tracks Mix **11.30** Unclassified **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4
6.0am Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** In Our Time **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night – A Year With the Police (4/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Crossing Continents (7/7) **11.30** Great Lives (R) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **12.30** Sliced Bread (2/10) **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. How the same story can look very different depending on how it's written. (9/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** Yellow Lips. Drama, by Katie Redford. (R) **3.0** Ramblings. Clare Balding joins adopted nine-year-old Freddie and his two mothers on the Thames Path. (1/7) **3.27** Radio 4 Appeal: Cure EB (R) **3.30** Open Book (R) **4.0** Princess. Charlene White and Ravynn Stringfield look at Black Panther's Princess Shuri. (7/10) **4.30** Inside Science **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** It's a Fair Cop (R) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** A Celebration for Ascension Day. A service live from St Martin-in-the-Fields in London. **9.0** Inside Science (R) **9.30** In Our Time **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece (4/10) **11.0** Rylan: How to Be a Man. A talk with Strictly star and wildlife cameraman Hamza Yassin. (1/10) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

Radio 4 Extra
6.0am Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (5/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **7.30** All Those Women (4/4) **8.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **8.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **9.0** Booked (5/6) **9.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **10.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3) **11.0** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay (5/6) **12.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **12.30** All Those Women (4/4) **1.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **1.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **2.0** Booked (5/6) **2.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **3.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3) **4.0** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay (5/6) **5.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **5.30** All Those Women (4/4) **6.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **6.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **7.0** Booked (5/6) **7.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **8.0** Writing: The Midlands (2/3) **9.0** Great Lives (5/9) **9.30** A Gathering Light (4/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (9/15) **10.0** It's a Fair Cop (2/4) **10.30** Tom Wrigglesworth's Hang-Ups (1/4) **11.0** Ida Barr: Artificial Hip Hop (1/4) **11.15** Little Lifetimes (4/4) **11.30** Rigor Mortis (2/6) **12.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3) **1.0** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **1.30** Dr Finlay (5/6) **2.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **2.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **2.30** All Those Women (4/4) **3.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **3.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **4.0** Booked (5/6) **4.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **5.0** The One Before the Last

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

E	S	B	O	L	E	R	O	L
R	P	A	R	K	A	L	E	S
E	B	A	F	T	E	F	H	A
B	L	G	C	A	F	P	Z	N
M	A	N	T	U	R	S	E	O
O	Z	H	D	E	M	I	L	R
B	E	T	N	I	L	S	U	A
R	R	T	N	D	I	I	O	K
F	L	E	E	C	E	N	G	S
T	D	R	E	K	I	B	A	H
R	E	F	E	E	R	U	C	I

Solution no 16,545

S	W	E	E	T	C	A	R	O	L	I	N	E
A		R		O		R		N		N		X
P	E	R	F	O	R	M		C	O	P	S	E
		A		T		P		O		U		C
T	O	T	O		F	I	L	M	S	T	A	R
O		I		U		T		I				A
A	C	C	E	P	T		E	N	T	O	M	B
D				I		I		G		S		L
S	T	A	G	N	A	N	T		A	C	N	E
T		D		A		S		S		U		
O	S	I	E	R		I	M	P	U	L	S	E
O		E		M		T		A		A		W
L	O	U	I	S	Q	U	A	T	O	R	Z	E

Sudoku no 6,065

6	7	9	5	2	8	1	3	4
1	2	3	4	6	7	9	5	8
5	4	8	1	9	3	7	2	6
2	5	1	6	3	4	8	7	9
8	6	4	2	7	9	5	1	3
9	3	7	8	5	1	6	4	2
4	8	2	9	1	5	3	6	7
7	1	6	3	8	2	4	9	5
3	9	5	7	4	6	2	8	1

Word wheel

INFLUENCE

Suguru

2	4	3	4	3	2
1	5	1	2	5	1
2	3	4	3	4	3
4	1	5	1	2	5
5	2	3	4	3	1
1	4	1	2	5	2

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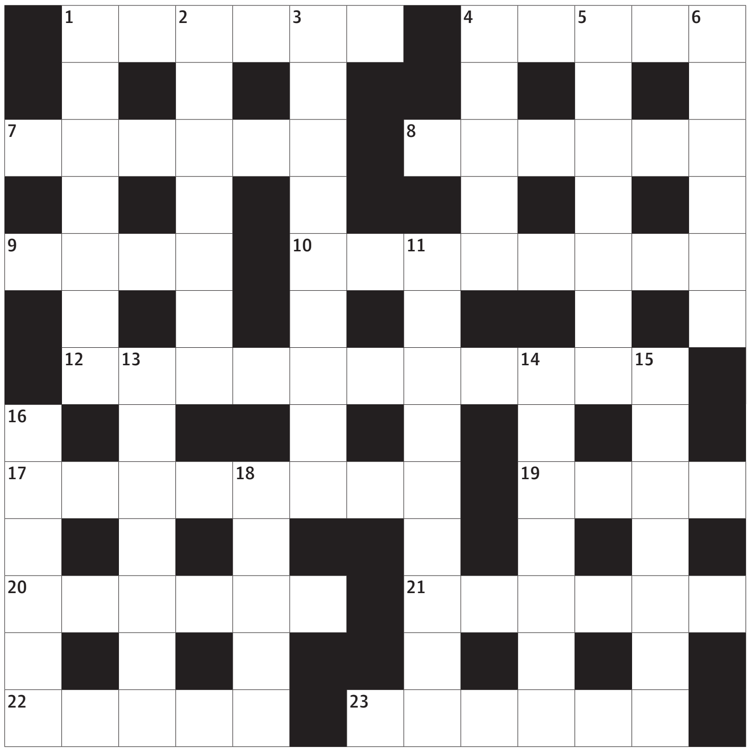
Quick crossword no 16,546

Across

1 One of the friends in Friends (6)
4 Not military - not rude (5)
7 Important official of the Ottoman empire (6)
8 Top part of a tank (6)
9 Fluctuate between extremes (2-2)
10 Like Shakespeare's Timon, say (8)
12 High-jump technique (7,4)
17 Woefully old-fashioned person (8)
19 Untamed (4)
20 All together (2,4)
21 Burn (6)
22 Good to eat (5)
23 Wind instrument (6)

Down

1 Separate two by two (4,3)
2 Menacing (7)
3 Voracious fish - bad RC aura (anag) (9)
4 Give rise to (5)
5 Giddiness (7)
6 Not presently active (6)
11 Exclamation accompanying a conjuring trick (3,6)
13 Providing many things at once - is no bum (anag) (7)
14 Real dope (3-4)
15 Stinking animal - opal etc (anag) (7)
16 Commercial (abbr) (6)
18 Ostentatious (5)



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Sudoku no 6,066

Hard. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

5								9
		7		2		4		
1			5	4	7			3
	4		7		6		3	
		5				9		
	7		4		9		1	
			2		1			
7								8
		1		8		6		

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

2					
5					
				3	4
			4	2	1
				3	

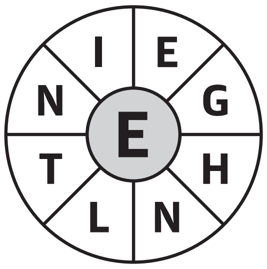
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 famous uncles in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

I	S	J	S	A	M	C	F	S
Y	I	M	O	K	V	E	U	D
I	L	L	O	E	S	M	I	E
A	A	C	D	T	E	L	I	R
A	S	R	E	R	T	H	B	F
J	I	R	U	A	L	U	N	T
S	O	O	T	H	C	E	N	R
C	D	H	A	K	T	E	I	E
J	N	S	N	D	B	R	E	B
E	O	M	O	N	T	Y	A	L
D	N	O	N	R	E	V	L	A

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-45. Good-38. Average-28.



Trivia corner

How many times has Julia Roberts been named in People magazine's 100 Most Beautiful People list?
a. Once
b. Twice
c. Three times
d. Five times
Answer top right

